Two Reverend crooks
A typical business luncheon ... p. 10

Self-righteous rites
The spirit of foot washing ..... p. 11

Haitian adoption
From picture to embrace ..... p. 12

CHRISTIAN COURIER
A Reformed Weekly

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Modern-day jubilee could offer relief to developing countries

GORDON LEGGE

Will this Guatemalan boy be forced to pay his share of his country's foreign debt?

Alan Doerksen

TORONTO — A coalition of Christian groups is working to bring the Old Testament concept of "jubilee" into modern times. As a new millenium approaches, they want to proclaim a jubilee that would see forgiveness of at least part of the debt of developing countries.

Margaret Boyce, a social activist and member of Canadian Voice of Women for Peace (which is part of the initiative) is very enthusiastic about it. She asserts that the plan to negotiate forgiveness of debts of developing countries is "not charity, but simple justice. Many of these countries have already paid the amount of their debt several times over in exorbitant interest, and their people continue to suffer in extreme poverty no matter what efforts they make. Remission of their debts could rescue millions from misery."

Boyce sees a direct connection with the initiative and the biblical concept of jubilee. "In the Bible, the jubilee year had a very specific meaning and function. It came every 50th year, and in it, all debts were to be cancelled. Land lost through debt was to be restored to the original owner. And slaves and indentured servants were to be set free."

Twenty-six social justice groups and denominations are involved with the Jubilee Working Group, including Ten Days for Global Justice, the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada (CCRCC), Citizens for Public Justice, the Canadian Council of Catholic Bishops and the Inter-Church Coalition on Africa.

Biblical jubilee needed now

"The initiative was in response to the United Kingdom's Jubilee 2000, working for the remission of Third World debt," explains Dennis Howlett, of Ten Days for Global Justice. Another impetus was an encyclical issued by the pope two years ago encouraging a biblical jubilee.

"We started out looking at the Bible and the jubilee tradition — a tradition that's needed at this moment in time," says Howlett.

The Canadian jubilee initiative has three themes, explains John Mihevc, of the Inter-Church Coalition on Africa, another member of the Jubilee Working Group. "Jubilee really means release from bondage, or what we're calling debt bondage, and also worker enslavement. The second theme is redistribution of wealth. And the third is renewal of creation."

The initiative will take place over three years, with each year focusing on one of these themes, starting with release from debt bondage.

Howlett sees the jubilee initiative as being especially crucial because of the rapid approach of the new millenium. One major step the group plans is a global petition on debt remission that will be presented to the 1999 meeting of the leaders of the Group of Eight industrialized nations. The petition should be ready for distribution by April, says Howlett.

See **JUBILEE** *page 2...*

Conference challenges students to learn from atheists

NANCY OLTHUIS

Dr. Merold Westphal (l.) answers a question from King's student Josh Van Berkel.

Nancy Olthuis

EDMONTON — "Atheism for Believers" is an unlikely title for a conference at a Christian university, but one to certainly get people's attention.

On January 28-29, The King's University College presented its annual Interdisciplinary Studies Conference which offers an opportunity to explore from a thoughtfull Christian perspective foundational issues shaping contemporary culture.

This year's conference examined the enduring contributions, for good or bad, of the 19th century's most powerful critics of Christianity: Freud, Marx and Nietzsche. While some of their ideas are contrary

See **GREAT** *page 2...*

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News

Jubilee group urges release from debt bondage

... *continued from page 1*

Besides the petition, the working group is developing other strategies such as Campaign 2000 Child Poverty in Canada, aimed at eliminating child poverty, and a campaign against sweatshops, which Ten Days and other groups have already been working on for some time.

One aim of the jubilee initiative is "to try to reach local churches and do theological education and build support for these issues and campaigns," says Howlett. "It's really to help Christians see that this justice is at the core and the heart of our faith."

John Mihevc explains that the Inter-Church Coalition on Africa has been very much involved with the jubilee initiative. One reason is that many of the world's poorest countries, which have massive foreign debts, are in Africa.

CC FILES

Arie Van Eek

The jubilee petition is focused on getting the leaders of the major industrialized countries to cancel Third World debt. Mihevc adds that the group also plans to compile information about the involvement of Canadian banks with foreign debt. But he notes that Canadian banks have little involvement in the world's poorest countries. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank have had more direct involvement.

'A sincere effort'

Arie Van Eek, executive director of the CCRCC, describes the jubilee initiative as "a sincere and well-researched effort at applying one of the most beautiful provisions Scripture makes" on behalf of the poor.

According to Van Eek, "the 50 poorest countries of the world owe $1.5 trillion US-equivalency dollars" to other countries. "The astounding fact is, every day, money handlers handle $30 trillion. We're trading in such big quantities, the money involved is so small," he observes, comparing the two amounts.

Van Eek hopes that the debt owed by the poorest nations will be completely cancelled. "These debts are so constraining it makes it impossible for them ever to become self-sufficient." But he asserts that the jubilee initiative "holds out a real hope."

COURTESY CATHOLIC NEW TIMES

Joseph Gunn

One of the next steps in the jubilee initiative is a bilingual forum that the Canadian Council of Churches will present in Montreal on May 11 and 12. Joseph Gunn, of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, plans to be involved with the forum and is committed to the jubilee initiative. Gunn hopes that Muslims and Jews will also be involved with the forum, because these religious groups also have connections to the biblical concept of jubilee.

Gunn would also like to see complete cancellation of Third World debt. He describes recent efforts by the IMF and World Bank to offer debt relief to poorer nations as "Band-Aid solutions." One example is the 1996 Highly Indebted Poor Countries initiative, which offered a total of $6 billion in debt relief to countries if they would meet set conditions. "The amount of money is minuscule," asserts Gunn, and countries would have to wait about six years to receive some of this financial relief.

Great atheists of 20th century examined

... *continued from page 1*

to Christian faith, much of their critique is true and deserves a fresh hearing, listeners were told.

Keynote speaker Dr. Merold Westphal did not argue the basic truths about God, Christianity or the Bible. The distinguished philosophy professor at Fordham, University, New York, and author of several books, notably *Suspicion and Faith,* asked his audience to look at their own beliefs and see if the daily practice of their faith reflects those beliefs.

Westphal presented lectures on Nietzsche, Freud and Marx in support of his thesis that the three great atheists of the 20th century have something important to say to Christians. He proposed that we take their critique of Christianity seriously as a call to self-examination and purification, rather than simply refuting what they had to say.

Use their critique

Westphal delivered this message to a gathering of 450 students and community members, including a delegation of students and professors from Augustana University College in Camrose, Alberta.

This year, The King's' faculty built various assignments into their courses which encouraged students to participate. As a result, the conference was attended at an unprecedented level — over 300 attended each plenary session. The King's was alive with students and faculty busily discussing the issues raised throughout the conference.

At the closing session on Nietzsche, Westphal noted that Nietzsche was similar to Freud and Marx in that all three believed that religion is a form of self-deception. But an important difference exists in that, as a postmodern philosopher, Nietzsche had lost his faith in reason.

Practising self-deception

In looking with heightened awareness at our Christian faith, Westphal presented "The Baalization of Yahweh": speaking "Yahweh" but treating him like Baal. The third commandment, "Do not take the name of the Lord your God in vain," is broken by placing The Name which is above all names at the service of private or sinister interests.

Westphal postulated that a breaking of the commandment in this way is a form of self-deception. We think we may be serving God but in fact are serving another idol. He cited the Crusades to the Holy Land and the African slave trade as examples.

Nietzsche said that the will to power is the ultimate principle of reality. Even the weak will strike back in the only way that they know how: a form of spiritual revenge by which they invent a morality of good and evil. Their revenge consists of saying their oppressors, the strong, are evil.

Even Thomas Aquinas gave substance to this claim. In his writings, he says one of the joys of heaven is watching the wicked being punished in hell. In effect he is saying, "You are evil and if there is a God, he will get you." Nations have justified oppression by calling on their God to guarantee such a moral judgment.

It's all egoism

Another critique by Nietzsche is that all Christian virtues are but glittering vices. Such glittering vices include a desire for justice which is just a thinly disguised desire for revenge. As an example, the desire to see Timothy McVeigh executed on the principles of justice can be seen as really a desire to revenge the loss of loved ones.

Compassion, said Nietzsche, is just a different kind of egoism in disguise: morally superior paternalism. Here he would invoke the example of the Pharisees. It is easier to see through the self-deception of others than to see through our own self-deception. Jesus himself rebuked the Pharisees on their self-righteous behavior: making their worship and tithing a public display rather than a private matter between themselves and their God.

Westphal concluded with a caution by saying critique can't be the whole game. "Man does not live by ExLax alone." We are living in times when cynicism is a very powerful force. Along with elimination, we also need nourishment because cynicism by itself is deadly to spiritual life. The danger is that we forget about grace.

Nietzsche, Freud and Marx were so pre-occupied with sin that they forgot about grace. The fundamental claims of the Christian faith are true. We are called to repentance and in Westphal's words to "re-awaken the prophetic voice of biblical religion." He sees critique as "a practice and not a recipe: a matter of discernment and never a totally private affair."

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The parable of the firemen

Marian den Boer

The morning newscast first set the alarm bells going in my head: *family dies... carbon monoxide poisoning... low grade flu... older gas appliance.*

Older gas appliance... We possessed a second-hand harvest gold gas range which for 10 years had served us faithfully — and who knows whom else it had served for the 30 years prior.

Low grade flu... A normally healthy child was sprawled out in the family room with flu-like symptoms: dizzy, tired, headachy and nauseous.

I lifted the burner pans on the range to check the pilot lights. One of the lights was hardly burning. I scrapped away some white sediment with a bread knife. The flame brightened. I opened the kitchen patio door. Fresh January air filled the room.

An hour later, when I heard the poisoning news repeated, along with a story about dead snowmobilers who hadn't heeded thin-ice warnings, I decided to call the gas company. They could check my range and set my mind at ease.

The gas company receptionist took down all the information and made an appointment for a gas man to see me in 48 hours. Then she thought again, "This possibly calls for the fire departement."

Within seconds I was in a three-way conversation with the gas company and the fire department, "Well send a truck over right away!"

Angels in orange

What had I done? We certainly didn't need a fire truck. Quickly I ran downstairs to Marty's office. "Uhh, Marty... a fire truck will be here any minute." I told him what had transpired making it sound as mundane as possible.

Within minutes we could hear the sirens approaching. The next thing I knew, my kitchen was filled with seven huge firemen in orange, yellow and black hats, coats and boots. They made me think of angels — calm and ready for any emergency. Fourteen-month-old Elizabeth just stared at them with her big brown eyes, not the least bit frightened.

A spokesman asked about circumstances, other gas appliances and whether we had a carbon monoxide tester. I had never heard of such a thing. It seems you plug the tester into an outlet and it beeps like a smoke detector if there is an unacceptable level of carbon monoxide in the air.

The fireman asked me about the little box we had in a kitchen outlet.

"Oh, that emits a high pitched screech to make life unpleasant for rodents. It's one of those things you kind of wonder about: does it really work or are they pulling one over on me?" I told him I bought it because I didn't want to set traps or use poison because we have a cat.

"If you have a cat you shouldn't need traps."

"He's declawed."

The firemen tramped through the house checking our gas furnace and water heater as well. They gave the place a carbon monoxide-free rating and asked me to sign a form verifying the work. I thanked them all and sheepishly asked if I could take a picture. Not one responded to the request, so I dropped it. I don't think it's possible to take a picture of angels anyway.

Marian den Boer lives with her husband, Marty, and five of their children in Hamilton, Ont. They're beginning to wonder if these things happen to other people too.

Evangelicals call on PM to intervene

TORONTO (EFC) — The Canadian government must act quickly to help ensure that 100,000 people in Sudan threatened by starvation and death are saved, said the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) in a letter to Prime Minister Jean Chretien.

EFC president Gary Walsh told Chretien that 100,000 people from southern Sudan are fleeing their homes due to intense fighting in and around the towns of Wau, Aweil and Gogrial. The radical Islamic government of Sudan is engaged in a civil war against Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army in southern Sudan, an area populated mainly by Christians and followers of traditional religions.

The government is prohibiting efforts co-ordinated by the United Nations to deliver food and medical aid to the affected population and extended a flight ban to cover half the population in southern Sudan. Walsh said that this poses a grave danger to the people fleeing their homes because of the increased fighting.

Walsh asked that Canada use its influence in the UN General Assembly and with the UN Security Council to intervene by pressuring the Sudanese government to allow UN flights to resume delivery of food and medicines to stranded populations in the South.

EFC is suggesting that concerned Canadians write the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy, the Secretary of State for Latin America and Africa David Kilgour as well as the Sudanese embassy in Ottawa and Sudanese president Omar Hassan al-Bashir.

India's 'Imelda Marcos' tries political comeback

CC Staff

MADRAS, India — During India's recent national election campaign, observers were stunned to see a woman some people call the 'Imelda Marcos if India' try to make a political comeback.

Jayalalitha Jayaram is a former Indian movie star who later moved into politics and became the chief minister of state for the province of Tamil Nadu, with a population of 55 million. As chief minister, she accepted only a token salary of one rupee (about four cents) a month, and reported no assets.

But in 1995, she put on an extravagant wedding reception for her foster son which drew 200,000 guests and cost about $10 million, which she billed to the state treasury.

386 pairs of shoes

To no one's surprise, Jayaram was arrested and charged with fraud amounting to $270 million; she awaits trial. Investigators found in her possession 10,000 saris, 386 pairs of shoes, 19 cars and $1 million worth of gold.

Although her Tamil regional party was completely routed in the 1996 regional election, Jayaram campaigned in this year's national election on her party's behalf.

Few political observers expect Jayaram to win back many seats, but her audacity has stunned the nation again, reports the *Globe and Mail.*

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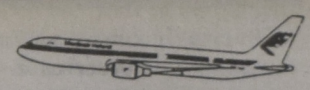

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Editorial

The Olympic gods are idols, don't you know?

If the saying "man proposes but God disposes" ever applied, it is certainly the case with outcomes at the International Olympic Games. It never ceases to amaze me how sportscasters predict certain outcomes with boldness, only to see many predictions come to naught. Has it never occurred to them that so much can go wrong with some athletes, and that so much can go right for others? These prophets lack the discipline of Prov. 27:1: "Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth."

The result of false expectations is that people are disappointed for the wrong reasons. It was humorous, for example, to see Canada's women's hockey team accept a silver medal with sad faces. What's wrong with a silver medal? Of course, rivalry between the Canadian and the American teams was so fierce that nothing short of gold would do.

Every Olympics has its moments of glory and shame. For a while Canada's reputation was tarnished by the Olympic Committee's decision, later retracted, to take away Ross Rebagliati's gold medal won in snowboarding. Traces of marijuana in his blood said volumes about a lifestyle that many snowboarders seem to embrace. (I say this even though our son Steve is a snowboard instructor in the Rocky Mountains of Alberta. He, by the way, thought Rebagliati deserved to lose his medal. At least some members of the snowboard community do not approve of smoking up.)

Canada's men's hockey team could not live up to all the hype that had preceded them. They played fairly well, losing only by a shoot-out; but the shame of not winning was too great for these hockey gods. What does it say about a country when its national psyche goes into free-fall because the puck would not go past Dominik Hasek?

The Olympic ideals

And what does it say about the Olympic Games themselves when what was meant to be an encouragement to amateur athletes has now become an unashamed display of professionalism? The sports I enjoyed most were those around which there was little glamor and few expectations, although I must say that watching people ski or sled down mountains is not exactly a heart-stopping experience.

The greatest challenge for me always is putting aside patriotic loyalties and enjoying the competition for its own beauty and skills. This was most easily achieved when Canadians were not participants or not in the running. Somehow the Olympic ideals of fair play and impartiality are hard to achieve for me. It tells me that I, like many others, am seeking to enlarge myself through the group I am identified with.

I know what the biblical ideal is. If it is true that the bell tolls for me when anyone dies, (John Donne's and Ernest Hemingway's version of "for as in Adam all die"), it is equally true that every award or achievement is mine, too. A Czech victory in hockey and a Norwegian triumph in cross-country skiing enlarges all of us.

According to Olympic ideals, Olympic competition is intended to test the skill and strength of individuals, not nations. But then, that idea goes right against the idea of playing a gold medalist's national anthem and the fact that reporters keep a tally of each country's number of medals, though the IOC does not keep that kind of score since it does not believe in having nations win the Olympics.

Challenging the gods

Another question one might ask is whether we should encourage athletes to perfect their skills to the point of Olympic status. What goes into the preparation of an Olympic performer? Is that the way God wants us to develop our bodies? What sacrifices are made along the way?

Should we be more suspicious of ideals that have their origin in pagan Greek thought with its emphasis on human beings striving to be like the gods? It is true that the Greek gods did not approve of *hubris*, the Greek word for pride. But Greeks liked the idea of giving the gods a run for their money.

Speaking of gods, the International Olympic Committee, which governs the games, treats itself like royalty the way it provides itself with luxurious accommodations and all kinds of other perks. It is no secret either that in order for a city to be awarded either the Summer or Winter Olympics, it has to grease a significant number of palms.

It's strange that in today's world, where public accountability is such a strong requirement, this international body is totally self-governing and self-appointing, owing no one an explanation for its choice of sites, for example. A few books, like *The Politics of the Olympic Games* and *Lords of the Rings*, are eye-openers in that they expose the corruption surrounding this "august" body.

A test of myself

All of this leaves me wondering: What should we as Christians do with the Olympics? Should we enjoy it holus-bolus? After all, who does not admire the endurance of a Bjoern Daehlie completing the 50-kilometre Nordic competition or enjoy the powerful and graceful performance of Victor Kraatz and Shae-Lynn Bourne, regardless of the shoddy judging. Isn't it hypocritical to enjoy watching the games and then to pronounce judgment on them?

It doesn't need to be. Things in the world tend to be mixed a lot. To most things there is some beauty and some ugliness. We can't avoid getting into the mix ourselves. But that doesn't mean we cannot and should not keep some distance between us and the less lovely aspects of the Olympics.

I have found that watching the Olympics is as much a test of myself as participation is for the athletes. Who am I? Who is that person confessing Christ and falling prey to national chauvinism at the same time? Why did I want Ross Rebagliati to keep his medal?

I know this in my heart of hearts: the greatest one in the Kingdom of Heaven is that person who humbles him- or herself like a little child. There are no medals for such people. There are no endorsements awaiting the meek. But they will inherit the earth. Now that is better than Olympic gold, which, by the way, is in reality a silver medal with a gold coating. Sorry. I didn't mean to disappoint anyone, but never has Canada, or any other nation, won a *gold* Olympic medal. Ah yes, there is some truth in the world after all. **BW**

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Letters

It's time for a strong ecumenical witness

Thank you for your encouraging editorial "Children need to eat, play and learn freely" (Feb. 6). It was challenging and helpful.

The editorial could also have been entitled, "Religious leaders and church councils need to confess freely and publicly." For, as you point out, the religious leaders who, on behalf of the institutional churches, rightly speak about the causes of poverty, could be "more vociferous about the decline of moral values in society." You then ask: "Why are they not calling this nation back to God?"

A good question. In my experience, some religious leaders who have a comprehensive understanding of the gospel and are reasonably familiar with the fundamental issues of our turbulent times are often willing and even eager to do so. However, they are not always so sure how calling Canada back to God can be said and done in biblically obedient and culturally relevant ways that truly speak to the hearts and minds of fellow citizens and our economic, educational, political and social leaders and the media.

Other religious leaders think that all they and their churches have to do is simply demand a return to undefined "moral values" and issue loud protests against what they think is going wrong in our largely secularized culture. They usually are merely opposing what they perceive to be evil, rather than proposing good alternatives.

Still others have given up on the world. They privatize the Gospel, spiritualize faith and thus secularize life. They even add to the major problems we are duty-bound to tackle.

Ecumenical affirmations

For some time now, I've been quietly suggesting to several Catholic and Protestant leaders to seriously consider drafting a clear, ecumenical, Spirit-directed public affirmation of what the gospel invites God's creatures to be and do at this time in history.

Such an ecumenical affirmation could articulate in contemporary language

(1) why and how we can live out more joyfully and meaningfully the liberation and renewal that flow from Jesus Christ, and

(2) what this powerful Evangel actually means for the way(s) we live and work and for the enormous economic, educational, moral, political and social challenges of our day.

I've made these informal suggestions in the context of the upcoming millennium and the urgent need for God's people to concretely proclaim in the abiding message of redemption, reconciliation and restoration of all of life.

Such an affirmation that speaks out of the gospel would propose alternative ways of life that could result in a different economic, education, politics, social action and worship, and may well appeal to many, many neighbors. Our neighbors now often have considerable difficulty figuring out just exactly what life-giving differences the unique message and ministry of Jesus make for daily living at the edge of the 21st century.

Gospel alternatives

With a growing number of friends and co-workers in various faith communities, I continue to explore new ways and effective means of ecumenically promoting and practising a distinct public presence that concretely conveys the hope, justice, leaven, light and salt of which Jesus speaks, and which we, in faith, may share through his grace, love, mercy, and resurrection power.

Maybe a constructive discussion can also begin in CC as to how such an integral witness can be stimulated locally, regionally, and nationally by editors, preachers, teachers, churches, denominations, educational institutions, media, and social action organizations.

Such an open-hearted dialogue could well contribute to deeper, and more visible biblical unity among many believers and broader, more public, ecumenical influence for the common good of all people and the well-being of our communities and our nation.

I look forward to learning much from your readers' responses.

Gerald Vandezande
National Public Affairs Director
Citizens for Public Justice
Agincourt, Ont.

Speaking on our behalf?

Reinder Klein's article "Weeping by the (polluted) waters of Babylon" (Dec. 12, '97) is another example of a CRC-sanctioned committee professing to speak on behalf of 104 Christian Reformed churches and their members on a topic of which they know little. I recall that this same committee was criticized for speaking on behalf of the CRC when not authorized to do so. Do we not have a similar case here?

Why does this committee continue to speak on "my" behalf like this? Perhaps speaking as individuals.... but not as speaking for thousands of CRC members who have not been consulted. I for one do not like to place in the hands of a few the right to speak for the many. I say we get back to basics and have local consistories (councils) meet with and speak to local MLAs/MPs about ecclesiastical matters.

Regarding pollution, I agree we have a problem. But... do CRC people drive fewer cars, fewer miles, own smaller houses, use fewer electrical appliances, insist on fewer roads, shop less for instant gratification, fly less, turn down the heat in their churches and on and on the list goes. I for one can not answer honestly in the affirmative, hence I have to call myself and fellow believers to account... not some monolithic government bureaucracy who would simply pollute even more to give me a $4 million study that tells me nothing.

I move we disband the Committee for Contact with the Government. Do I have a seconder?

J.A. Boessenkool
Surrey, B.C.

Opinion

Should Canada follow Australia?

A Constitutional Convention in Canberra has just been convened, and already it's producing sharp and bitter divisions among Australians. Do Canadians really want to follow them down this trail? Some do. The radical wing of the extreme left is already picking up the cry to abolish the monarchy. Why?

The monarchy doesn't cost Canada a dime. If we did not have the Governor-General, we'd have a President with all the same accoutrements and perks. No money goes from Canada to support Her Majesty. When she visits, we entertain her as we would any other head of state, but there are no additional costs incurred because she is our queen, too. Why, then, the clamor to cut our ties to the monarchy?

I think it springs from the same philosophical root as the radical Jacobinism which produced the bloody French Revolution, and is still at large in the world: their battle-cry "No God, No King!" is still with us as a declaration of radical autonomy which means, in effect, "No law, no authority! No one's gonna tell me what to do!"

It's at the heart of the so-called "pro-choice" movement. One of its spokespersons once admitted on CBC-TV, "It doesn't matter whether I choose right or wrong; what matters is that I CHOOSE!" We need to see where that philosophy has led us, and where it may lead us.

During the time the United States was sinking deeper and deeper into the quagmire of Viet Nam, Bill Moyers, who had been press secretary to President Lyndon Johnson and who is now a respected broadcaster, publicly lamented America's lack of distinction between the head of state and the head of the executive branch.

The head of state, he pointed out, represents the nation and its history. When that person is also the head of government, it creates an unhealthy restraint on advisors to the chief executive. "No one is willing to confront the embodiment of the nation and say, 'Sir, you're being a fool.'" Moyers was convinced that lives would have been saved by having the head of state separate from the head of government — something like Canada's constitutional monarchy.

If thoughtful people in the world's most powerful nation envy what we possess, and it causes us no tangible problems — why should we contemplate stirring up a divisive argument we don't need?

Ron Gray
CHP National Leader
Abbotsford, B.C.

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A problem of Olympic proportions

John Wood

The news from Nagano and the Winter Olympics has a familiar ring. Canada has done better (than previously) and worse (than hoped for) at this year's games.

But laced among the reports from the slopes is talk of El Nino and snow-eating winds off the Sea of Japan. At times, it's been a veritable short-course in meteorology. Japan, it seems, is the centre for environmental discussions this year.

In December it was host to the Kyoto Conference on Global Climate Change. Now the Nagano news is detailing the unusual toboggan track. Two short sections of track actually run uphill to avoid damage to sensitive hillside plants. It all highlights our rising awareness of the environment. We can't seem to ignore it and simply relax in front of the tube and watch the games.

Some are saying that is exactly the point. We can no longer ignore the environment.

Heading for millennial meltdown?

The written rumblings of the approaching millennium have been mercifully sparse(so I am going to get this over with right now, and promise not to mention it again!). There is, of course, a real concern about the "millennium problem" in computers. The computer calendars will be going wacko as they roll into the year "00" and cannot compute the correct date.

But now another millennium prediction is out. According to an article in *Science*(January 23), we are "Entering the Century of the Environment: A New Social Contract for Science."

I have often mused about, and even commented in these pages, about the importance of the environment to society. But here we have it. A bald assertion that the environment will dominate our lives in the years ahead. It will directly provide the central challenges of society. Environmental change will be the catalyst for social and political changes large and small for the foreseeable future.

Are we really entering the environmental century? Few journals are more prestigious than *Science*, which is published by the American Association of the Advancement of Science. Its pages are seldom graced with mere speculation. The article by Jane Lubchenco is no exception, and it is meant to be a discussion starter. Her goal is to stir scientists to re-think the challenges facing both society and the scientific community.

It would be a good thing if such a wide-ranging discussion took place in science. It would be even better if it took place among those of us who say we listen carefully to the Creator of all things. It seems to me that the conversation cannot be limited to the professional community alone. We will not make progress by deferring decisions to a few with special knowledge.

A timely reminder

What do we need? I think that Cornelius Plantinga, Jr.,gave us a good insight recently in "Preaching Sin to Reluctant Hearers: An Address to Preachers" (Perspectives,December 1997). It isn't easy, he says, to know when we are sinning. Someone has to point it out to us. We must be urged, as Isaiah did, to learn to do good; to seek justice.(Isa.1:17).

And so it is with the environment — or rather, the creation. A lot of people don't "get it." Others would rather forget about it. Few want to acknowledge that there might be sin involved with the destruction we rain (reign!) down on the creatures. So the scientists, some of them Jerimiah-like, are calling us (and themselves) to re-think our relationship to the earth.

Not bad advice at the end of the millennium. The Olympic Games are a metaphor of life. But we face a challenge bigger than a ski-jump, more complicated than an ice-dance routine and requiring more courage and self-sacrifice than anything in athletics.

But then, of course, why should this generation expect anything less? We have been given opportunities greater than at any other time in history. It is, in fact, our time to face this challenge of Olympic proportions.

John R. Wood teaches environmental science at The King's University College, Edmonton.

Conference to explore faith and the environmental professional

John R. Wood

EDMONTON — The national and international problems of air and water pollution in the Great Lakes basin, marine and freshwater fisheries depletion all require expert opinion and action. Both the public and politicians depend on highly trained specialists for accurate analysis and ethical policy recommendations. In the adversarial context of most environmental issues there seldom seems room for a Christian perspective — or is there?

A number of Christian environmental professionals began asking this question recently. They have organized "Caring for God's Creation: Faith and the Environmental Professional." This international conference of Christian environmental professionals will be held May 22-24, at The King's University College in Edmonton.

The conference will draw together Christian environmental professionals who seek to apply biblical principles of caring for creation in their professional life. This may be the first time that Christians who work in diverse environmental fields have the opportunity to meet and discuss these concerns.

Principles in practice

The keynote address by Dr. Calvin DeWitt will focus on biblical stewardship principles. DeWitt, who teaches environmental science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is well known to CC readers. His practical experience when elected to political office in Wisconsin(see CC, Dec. 19, 1997, p. 1-2, "Town of Dunn a lesson in growth management") has taken him well beyond the ivory tower.

Caring for God's creatures

The key question of the conference, "What is a Christian environmental professional?", will be addressed by Dr. Fred Van Dyke, professor of biology at Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa. Van Dyke is a former wildlife biologist with the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks. He will discuss how being scientifically informed and ethically committed shapes and influences the practice of a Christian environmental professional.

Other conference speakers will explore how these principles shape professional environmental practice in law, government, industry, business, education and the media.

Workshops include: "Caring for Earth's Climate System"; "The Role of Law in Caring for Creation"; " Caring for God's Creatures: Wildlife at Risk";, and "Mega-Projects in God's Creation."

Further information is available at the conference website at **www.kingsu.ab.ca** or from conference organizer Dr. Harry Spaling (e-mail: hspaling @kingsu.ab.ca).

Hunting, pleasure cannot be bedfellows, say British Christians

LONDON, England (EP) — Fox hunting and other sports which involve killing animals have been condemned by the Christian Socialist Movement, the small but influential English religious movement to which Prime Minister Tony Blair belongs.

"The use of power to control and kill, diverted into pleasure, is a fundamental betrayal of the power which the Creation story tells us is God-given," says a pamphlet published by the group. "As the early saints showed, hunting for pleasure and Christianity cannot be bedfellows."

The traditional English sport of fox hunting has come under increasing criticism. Late last year the House of Commons passed a bill banning hunting with hounds by a vote of 411-151, but the bill is unlikely to become law because of the low priority for others in government and because of pressure from the aristocracy.

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Film Review

Sin, sorrow and grace co-mingle in The Apostle

Marian Van Til

The Apostle

Rated PG-13. Stars, written, directed, produced by Robert Duvall. Farrah Fawcett, Miranda Richardson, Billy Bob Thornton.

This one-man, clear-eyed tour de force which justifies the ways of Southern fundamentalist Christianity to secular (North) Americans is nothing short of astonishing. And it should mark nothing short of a watershed moment in American film history.

Conceived and realized by seasoned character actor Robert Duvall, and produced with $5 1/2 million of his own money because Hollywood wouldn't touch it, the film debunks stereotypes and simply does not allow for self-satisfied sneers and superior smirks from secular (or even fellow-Christian) outsiders.

In the embodiment of a Texan named Sonny, a seriously flawed church planter and "apostle" who initially has trouble figuring out the difference between his will and God's, Duvall peels off the layers of cliche with which fundamentalism has been plastered (sometimes at its own doing) and forces viewers to make a clean reckoning.

Fast talker

Sonny seemingly grows up with living-water in his veins. He ingests the theology, rhythm and emotions of the black church to which he is taken from early childhood by his nanny. By age 12, as a miniature evangelist and fast-talking preacher, he can gush it back to them with gusto.

The man Sonny, still a fast-talker, and apparently something of a fast-liver, sees himself as a church planter and servant of God. But it seems he may never have truly undergone the total heart change he seems to so desperately pray and wish for in others.

Complex humanity

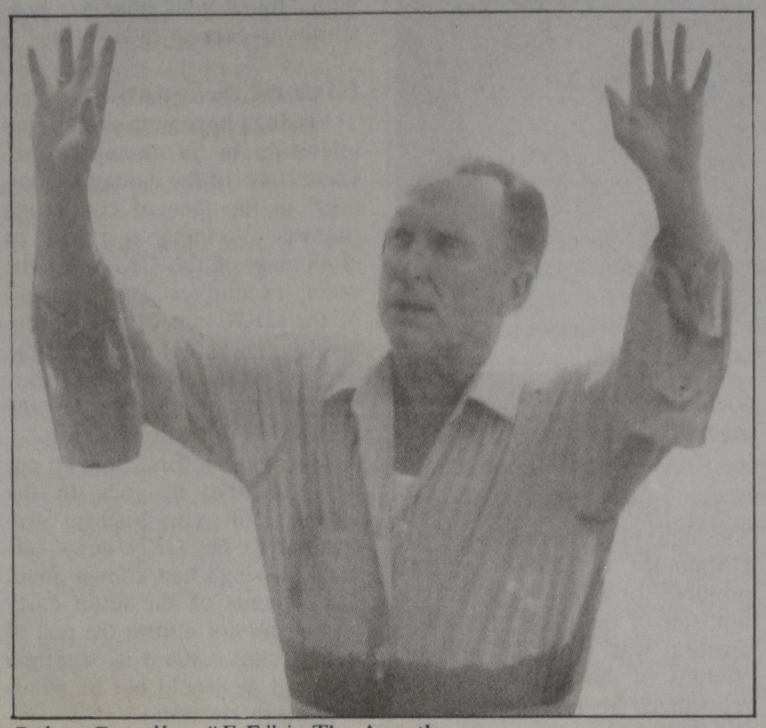
Sonny is a complex combination of dedication and depravity, evangelical energy and ego, love and lust, greed and grace. His besetting sins are all the more poignant for the fact that he recognizes them but can't seem to overcome them.

He can be loving and a true friend. Yet he's abusive, even violent; he's vain and self-satisfied even while proclaiming his trust in Jesus. He's got a wandering eye, despite having a beautiful younger wife (Farrah Fawcett, surprisingly effective in the role) and two stunningly attractive children (his "Beauties," he calls them).

Sonny's wife, tired of his shenanigans, seeks comfort with the youth pastor and asks her pastor-husband for a divorce. When she rallies church leaders to oust Sonny, who thinks he can't be touched, he begins a quick descent into an emotional hell. Unexpectedly, he bashes his wife's lover with a baseball bat, leaving us long to wonder whether or not he killed the man.

Fearing he might have, he heads for the road.

During a stay with a kindly, elderly black man, Sonny, now calling himself "E.F.," undergoes a true conversion. Duvall conceives these events very carefully, realizing that showing us a Damascus Road experience would be too pat. Instead, we're not at all sure E.F.'s request of the Lord to make him a modern-day apostle, and his "baptism" of himself, are anything more than continued bluster and self-deception.



Robert Duvall as "E.F." in The Apostle.

Exposing the heart

Then we start to get small, shining hints at transformation. In a tiny Louisiana backwater, E.F. finds Charles Blackwell, a preacher his elderly host had mentioned. With Blackwell's acquiescence and E.F.'s energy, they plant a new church. Bit by bit E.F. builds a congregation, and slowly, surely, grace unfolds, love breaks in and repentance brings renewal, both for Sonny and others.

Remarkably, a sizable portion of this film consists of *church services.* (I overheard one theatre goer saying he felt like he had just been in church, but he said it in what sounded like amazement, not irritation.) It is particularly through those services that Duvall exercises his knack for baptism by emersion into the very heart of this Southern Christian subculture. It's a heart that, for all its weaknesses, Duvall obviously respects.

He isn't shy about presenting the emotional ecstasy and barely-basic nature of fundamentalism which have caused it to be the butt of jokes. But he sees a real faith as well. What finally elicits *our* respect, for both film maker and subject, is that Duvall's painstaking presentation of the "straight goods" — these are fallen *and* redeemed sinners — allows us to make our own uncoerced judgment. Duvall, we feel, wants to "justify" these people to us, but he has no axe to grind.

Clearly color-blind

This film has one other singular attribute: I can't think, off hand, of another movie that does more for race relations than this one does without ever *saying* an overt word about it.

These Christians are truly color-blind, and it's a satisfying sight to behold. One comes away with the feeling: "Well, of course, when one serves Jesus it just can't be any other way." *The Apostle*'s silent lesson in this regard is a two-edged sword, breathing happy encouragement and standing as an eloquent indictment on those Christians who live and talk otherwise.

In many instances stereotypes arise from beads of truth, however tiny. Here, those truth droplets remain. There's no escaping that these simple, uneducated Christians, who rely almost solely on emotion as a tool of faith, are splashing in the shallow end of the biblical and theological pool.

But they're in the pool, and having a good time at it, and are much more concerned with inviting others to join the party than some of the rest of us are. As Sonny muses to himself when he observes a canal flotilla of icons approaching the site of an outdoor mass in this largely Catholic area of Louisiana: *You do it in your way; I do it in mine. But we're both getting it done. Jesus be praised.*

That sentiment comes to mind as an epithet for this film.

Gospel Films unveils new website, announces new name

Marian Van Til

MUSKEGON, Mich. — For nearly half a century, Gospel Films has been spreading the Good News via film and video. That outreach continues, but technology has changed, yielding new opportunities and challenges for the U.S.-based media pioneer.

Gospel Films is now called Gospel Communications International (GCI)— and has a new site on the World Wide Web. The change reflects GCI's ongoing commitment to using the most effective media possible to spreading the gospel, says president Billy Zeoli.

"When film became a significant part of popular culture, we were there," noted Zeoli. "When video developed as an alternative to film, we were there. When the Internet became accessible to millions around the world, we were there. Our new name sends a message that we'll continue to be creative and vigilant in using every appropriate technology and method to communicate the Gospel."

Spreading Gospel on the Internet

GCI's website offers a host of resources to Christians, including a newsletter; "Kids Corner"; "Gospel Direct," which offers Bible and Christian software; a daily devotional; "Bible Gateway," a searchable online Bible in multiple translations and languages; and the "Internet for Christians," a biweekly newsletter with news and website summaries for interested Christians.

The Internet for Christians was the brainchild of Calvin College communications professor Quentin Schultz. In 1994, conversations between Schultz and Gospel Films director of marketing Duane Smith "gave birth to an idea for spreading the gospel on the Internet," says background provided on the GCI site. The Internet for Christians can be subscribed to on its own, via e-mail, or can be contacted via the GCI website at: **www.gospelcom.net/gf**.

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Church

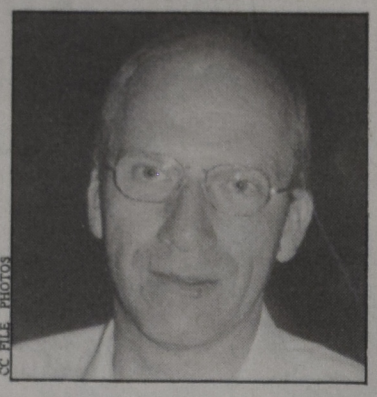
GKN erupts in controversy over pedophilia

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (REC) — A firestorm of controversy arose in the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, GKN) in January.

A theology professor proposed the GKN begin to deal systematically with pedophilia (adult sexual attraction to children), and the GKN Moderator expressed some sympathy. Then a cloud of protests led to the resignation of both and to the resignation of the entire executive committee of the GKN synod.

On January 10 a letter from L.C. van Drimmelen appeared in the Christian daily newspaper *Trouw*. Van Drimmelen was a lecturer in church law at the Free University of Amsterdam and thus an advisor to the GKN synod.

He wrote in an attempt to evoke some sympathy for pedophiles. His arguments, however, were borrowed from statements of a pedophile recently sentenced to jail for his actions. The pedophile was an acquaintance of a friend of van Drimmelen, Jaap Huttenga, who is a GKN pastor in Zeist. Van Drimmelen included in his letter a statement that he, too, was a pedophile.



CC FILE PHOTOS

GKN moderator Richard Vissinga has resigned .

The GKN moderator Richard Vissinga, initially supported van Drimmelen. He said it should be possible for a pedophile to be a minister in the GKN. However, reaction was swift and furious. Victims of the jailed pedophile recognized his arguments in van Drimmelen's statements. The link between them was uncovered.

On January 12 van Drimmelen revealed that he was not a pedophile. He said he was using an analogy to John Kennedy's statement in 1961 at the Berlin wall that he "was a Berliner." He said he had done it for its shock effect. Van Drimmelen said he was expressing solidarity with "those who have no possibility to express themselves."

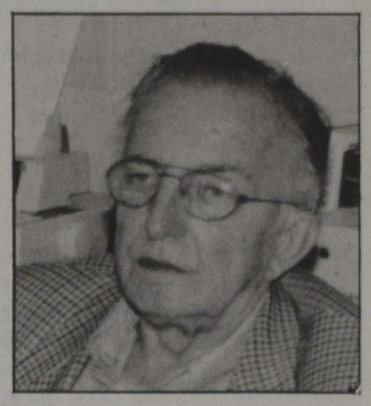
Historic resignation

Vissinga appeared on national television in an attempt to reverse some of the damage. However, in the face of continuing protests Vissinga resigned as moderator of the GKN. All the other executives (moderamen) of the GKN joined him. Technically, it was not a resignation, but a declaration that they "placed their functions at the disposal of the synod."

This was the first time an entire executive resigned in the GKN's 106-year history. According to the GKN news service, Vissinga had known about the contents of the letter early on but did not inform the rest of the executive about it. Vissinga declared he would not be available for re-election.

In a special statement, the executive said they were resigning because they could not function in a trustworthy manner. "Through the way in which we initially reacted to these developments, the impression was given that the moderamen were giving inadequate justice to the victims of sexual abuse."

They expressed regret that they initially allowed space for



Klaas Runia

that suggestion to develop. They apologized for the damage they had caused. "Pedophilial relations are by definition unequal. Every sexually tinted action by adults against children is intolerable." They stated they would pass on the task of sorting this matter out to the new moderamen.

No thought for victims

Pieter Boomsma, a former moderator of the GKN, wrote in *Centraal Weekblad* that the statement of the moderamen was an honest admission of error. He said that people who react this way should be given another chance.

Boomsma also noted that Vissinga's initial reaction was without doubt motivated by pastoral concern for pedophiles. "However, how was it possible that others concerned with this, the victims, fell completely out of the picture for awhile?"

Klaas Runia, former Rector of the Theological University of Kampen, wrote in the same issue of *Centraal Weekblad* that he saw no reason for the whole executive to resign. He believed that Vissinga acted on his own. He also stated that if Vissinga were re-elected, it would amount to a cover-up of his actions. Re-election would mean that the victims were once again left out in the cold.

12-hour Marathon

On January 22, the synod of the GKN met for almost 12 hours in an extraordinary session to decide what to do. It decided that Vissinga's mistakes were too serious to be overlooked. The synod accepted his resignation and elected J.W. Doff, a pastor from Rotterdam, in his place.

The other members of the executive were judged to have made some mistakes, but their responsibility was also lower and they were retained in office. Vissinga's remarks on television a few days after the letter had appeared were also not acceptable to the synod.

Prior to the synod meeting a small committee had worked to establish the sequence of events. The committee judged that both Huttenga and van Drimmelen had behaved in an unacceptable way. It also reproached Vissinga for acting alone.

'Power' relations forbidden

Even more seriously, the committee noted Vissinga did not take into consideration the strong opposition of the GKN to all forms of sexual abuse. Any use of power in sexual relations, and any allusions or hints with a sexual character are forbidden.

Vissinga did not deny those GKN policies, but his omission of any reference to them caused pain and suffering for the victims of sexual abuse. The mistakes of the other executives lay in their failure to oppose Vissinga, the committee concluded.

The GKN synod also believed that the affair damaged the process of union with two other churches. They resolve to work closely with the other churches to make clear that all forms of sexual abuse are intolerable.

Scots contemplate forming Christian political party

Marian Van Til

EDINBURGH — Based on a February 17 report in the *Edinburgh Evening News,* Christian Network-Scotland (CN-Scotland), an online gathering of Scottish evangelicals, told its subscribers that in the near future "a new mainstream Christian party could be formed to fight next year's Scottish Parliament elections.

"A survey among Scottish members of the pressure group Movement for Christian Democracy (MCD) found a clear majority in favor of the idea," CN-Scotland informed its readers. The proposal will be debated next month at the movement's annual conference. MCD was set up eight years ago by a then Liberal Democrat MP, David Alton.

Bolstering family commitment

Willie Docherty, chairperson of the Christian Democracy group, said a priority for a new party would be "measures to bolster family commitment." CN-Scotland says a questionnaire circulated on how best to promote Christian principles in politics found 64 per cent in favor of a "Christian-inspired party whose policies would be offered to all"; 63 per cent gave support to joining an existing party; 45 per cent backed Christians standing as independents; and 34 per cent favored a party open to Christians only.

Docherty said Scotland's proportional representation voting system offered small parties an unprecedented chance of winning seats in the new parliament. He added that MCD's annual conference in Glasgow on March 14 would have to decide whether to go ahead with the new party plan.

Docherty concluded, "We would have about a year to get ourselves organized if the feeling is to proceed further.... This is a commentary on the deterioration in integrity which has occurred in Scottish politics...."

Leading church figures are reportedly opposed to the creation of a Christian party. They argue that there are already Christians doing their best in all mainstream political parties.

The MCD questionnaire also found members strongly in favor of extending the responsibilities of the Scottish Parliament to cover abortion law, euthanasia, embryology, misuse of drugs, BBC Scotland, energy and social security.

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C.S. Lewis on 'The Efficacy of Prayer'

1998 is the centennial year of the birth of C.S. Lewis, Oxford don, children's writer, novelist, poet and great Christian apologist. The anniversary of Lewis's birth is on November 29, but because he was such a prolific writer, and one commemorative article won't begin to get at his output, we will from time to time throughout the year present readers with some of Lewis's thoughts on aspects of the Christian life. **MVT**

...The very question "Does prayer work?" puts us in the wrong frame of mind from the outset. 'Work': as if it were magic, or a machine — something that functions automatically. Prayer is either a sheer illusion or a personal contact between embryonic, incomplete persons (ourselves) and the utterly concrete Person.

Prayer in the sense of petition, asking for things, is a small part of it; confession and penitence are its threshold, adoration its sanctuary, the presence and vision and enjoyment of God its bread and wine. In it God shows himself to us. That he answers prayers is a corollary — not necessarily the most important one — from that revelation. What he does is learned from what he is.

'Allowed and commanded'

Petitionary prayer is, nonetheless, both allowed and commanded to us: "Give us this day our daily bread." And no doubt it raises a theoretical problem. Can we believe that God ever really modifies His action in response to the suggestions of [human beings]? For infinite wisdom does not need telling what is best, and infinite goodness needs no urging to do it.

But neither does God need any of those things that are done by finite agents, whether living or inanimate. He could, if he chose, repair our bodies miraculously without food; or give us food without the aid of farmers, bakers, and butchers; or knowledge without the aid of learned men; or convert the heathen without missionaries.

He lets *us* do it

Instead, he allows soils and weather and animals and the muscles, minds, and wills of men to co-operate in the execution of his will. "God," said Pascal, "instituted prayer in order to lend to his creatures the dignity of causality." But no only prayer; whenever we act at all he lends us that dignity. It is not really stranger, nor less strange, that my prayers should affect the course of events than that my other actions should do so. They have not advised or changed God's mind — that is, his overall purpose. But that purpose will be realized in different ways according to the actions, including the prayers, of his creatures.

For he seems to do nothing of himself which he can possibly delegate to his creatures. He commands us to do slowly and blunderingly what he could do perfectly and in the twinkling of an eye. He allows us to neglect what he would have us do, or to fail.

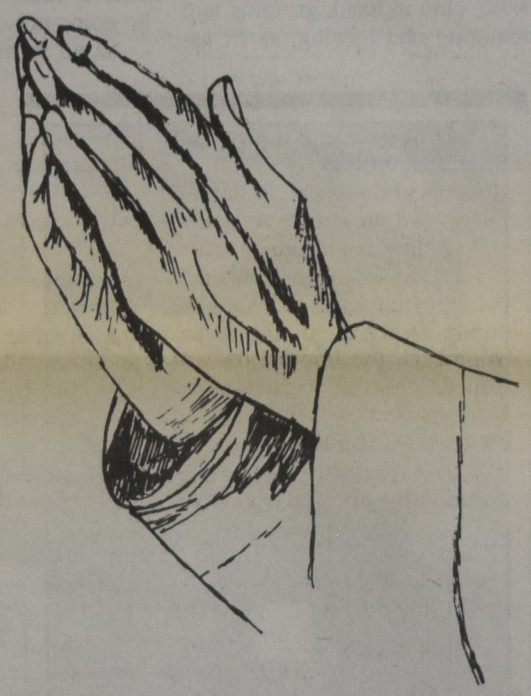
Perhaps we do not fully realize the problem, so to call it, of enabling finite free wills to coexist with Omnipotence. It seems to involve at every moment almost a sort of divine abdication. We are not mere recipients or spectators. We are either privileged to share in the game or compelled to collaborate in the work, 'to wield our little tridents. Is this amazing process simply Creation going on before our eyes? This is how (no light matter) God makes something — indeed, makes gods — out of nothing.

Christ's unanswered prayer

... Our act, when we pray, must not, any more than all our other acts, be separated from the continuous act of God himself, in which alone all finite causes operate.

... It would be even worse to think of those who get what they pray for as a sort of court favorites, people who have influence with the throne. The refused prayer of Christ in Gethsemane is answer enough to that.

And I dare not leave out the hard saying which I once heard from an experienced Christian: "I have seen many striking answers to



prayer and more than one that I thought miraculous. But they usually come at the beginning: before conversion, or soon after it. As the Christian life proceeds, they tend to be rarer. The refusals, too, are not only more frequent; they become more unmistakable, more emphatic."

... Does God then forsake just those who serve him best? Well, he who served him best of all said, near his tortured death, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" When God becomes man, that Man, of all others, is least comforted by God, at his greatest need.

There is a mystery here which, even if I had the power, I might not have the courage to explore. Meanwhile, little people like you and me, if our prayers are sometimes granted, beyond all hope and probability, had better now draw hasty conclusions to our own advantage. If we were stronger, we might be less tenderly treated. If we were braver, we might be sent, with far less help, to defend far more desperate posts in the great battle.

The article from which the above is excerpted first appeared in Atlantic Monthly, Jan. 1959. The whole article, including other essays can be found in The Worlds Last Night and Other Essays. NY: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1960.

Promise Keepers faces financial crunch but offers free rallies

Dan Wooding

DENVER, Co. — Promise Keepers, the fast-growing men's ministry that drew up to one million repentant and tearful men to Washington, D.C., in October of last year for its "Stand in the Gap" sacred assembly, has announced that it is laying off its entire paid staff of 345 next month in order to provide "free" events around the country this year.

Previously, the attendees were asked to pay a $60 admission charge to its stadium rallies, but this year all Promise Keepers' events in North America will charge no admission fees. Previously, admission fees provided 72 per cent of the organization's income. Now "Open the Gates in '98" is designed to remove all financial barriers to participation in Promise Keepers, thus helping low-income groups, including minorities.

A broken heart

Bill McCartney, Founder and CEO of the ministry, told the staff in the face of the layoffs, "I have a broken heart. But, I don't have a discouraged heart. I have a heart that is filled with hope." McCartney, the former University of Colorado head football coach, says that Promise Keepers is moving from a salaried staff to an all volunteer staff for an indefinite period of time — until revenues increase from voluntary donations. He stressed that the ministry will honor all commitment to all Promise Keepers vendors and they will be paid in full.

Many of Promise Keepers' 345 full-time staff in the U.S. have volunteered to continue to work with the organization in a concerted effort to complete preparations for 19 stadium events planned for this summer. The ministry expects that donations from local communities, churches and national sponsors will cover the considerable cost of producing the events.

McCartney has issued a challenge to American church leaders to rally around the ministry's twofold mission of calling men to church and bringing the churches of America together. He said, "We have seen how God has used this ministry to change men's lives and lead them back to church. Now, as the fees to all events are removed, it is time for those churches to assist us in our mission to men."

Last year, the Promise Keepers' board unanimously supported McCartney's call for removing admission fees from the stadium events that have been the hallmark of the ministry. More than 2.6 million men have attended such events in stadiums all over the U.S. since 1991.

Losing momentum?

In an article in the *Los Angeles Times*, writers Larry B. Stammer and Louis Sahagun, said, "The announcement stunned outside observers, including academics and authorities on religious movements who have followed the burgeoning men's ministry. By eliminating its staff and a budget that topped $70 million last year, Promise Keepers risks losing the momentum that made it one of the fast growing evangelical groups in the nation."

It appears that McCartney's appeal for help has not fallen on deaf ears. At Melodyland Christian Center, Anaheim, located by the main gate of Disneyland, before main speaker Oral Roberts delivered a sermon on healing, senior pastor Ralph Wilkerson pledged that his church would be sending a "substantial" gift to Promise Keepers to help them overcome their present financial crisis. He said that Promise Keepers had been such a blessing to the churches of America that it was now time for those churches to also be a blessing to Promise Keepers.

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Story

The religion business

Douglas Woosley

Rev. Adrian Briarly, dressed in black priestly garb, entered the lobby of Mama Mia's Restaurant, doffed his cap and stepped forward to examine the Italian artifacts encased in glass. A silver necklace caught his eye. For a moment, he imagined his right hand reaching through the glass and possessing it.

Briarly felt a tap on his left shoulder and heard someone behind him clear her throat. He stiffened, then turned on his well-polished, black heel to face the young hostess, who smiled enigmatically.

She motioned for Briarly to follow her around the corner. Coming to a halt at a table for two, she eyed him questioningly. Instead, the Anglican minister seated himself at a larger table against the wall. He looked up into her pretty olive face and smiled the smile of a man accustomed to getting his way.

A waiter immediately appeared and offered a cocktail, to which the rector responded, "I shouldn't think that a glass of red wine would be inappropriate — for the sake of digestion, you understand."

When the waiter delivered the wine, he said, "You're Belle's father, aren't you?"

"Why, yes. Did you and Belle go to school together?"

"Many years ago. I once attended a party at your house."

"You're not the Glass boy, are you?"

"I'm David Glass."

"I know your mother well. She has a wonderful singing voice. You're Methodists, aren't you?"

"We're a little bit of everything now."

"Yes, well.... Oh, I see my lunch companion approaching. If you will excuse us."

David recognized Tilden Penfors immediately, although he had not seen him since college 20 years before. He, too, wore the priestly garb of the Anglican Church. The cut of his clothes appeared more finely tailored than standard, and pressed to perfection.

David soon returned to the table and offered a cocktail to Penfors. Distracted, Tilden made a casual, sweeping motion with his hand and said, "I'll have the same as Rev. Briarly."

When David set the glass of wine before his ex-college roommate, he said, "There you go, Tilden."

"What!" Tilden jerked his head up and said, "David, it's you! My goodness!"

"Your humble waiter, sir," he said, bowing.

Tilden turned to Briarly and said, "When David and I were in university he was the religion major, while I studied everything from psychology to music to philosophy."

"But during your last year you got that fantastic fellowship to study theology at the University of Tubingen."

Briarly, losing his patience, said, "Yes, that's all very well and good. Waiter, we'll call you when we're ready to order."

After delivering their lunch, David kept retreated and observed the two men interacting. Their meeting reminded him of a typical business lunch; Tilden seemed to be pitching a proposal to the senior clergyman.

Judging from Briarly's body language and dour countenance, David appraised him to be a hard sell. Yet midway through their lunch, Tilden's intelligent wit seemed to be making headway. Briarly's posture relaxed; he began to laugh at Tilden's jokes. With a flourish Briarly ordered a second round of drinks.

He's flattering the codger, pure and simple, David thought. Tilden's appealing to the old man's vanity.

At the end of the meal, Briarly made a show of insisting on picking up the cheque; he then seemed to pout when Tilden did not protest too strongly. Briarly tipped David out of a pocketful of change and then walked out of the restaurant with Tilden, arm-in-arm.

Five minutes later, Tilden Penfors re-entered the restaurant and flagged David down.

"I would have spoken to you more," he said, "except that Briarly considers it a breach of etiquette to associate with the help."

"Yes, that Briarly seems ever so proper."

"He's strictly old school."

"Has any of that rubbed off on you, Tilden?"

"It's bound to have, I'm afraid."

"You're not living in Heartsfield now, are you?"

"No, but I am staying the night. Would you care to get together this evening?"

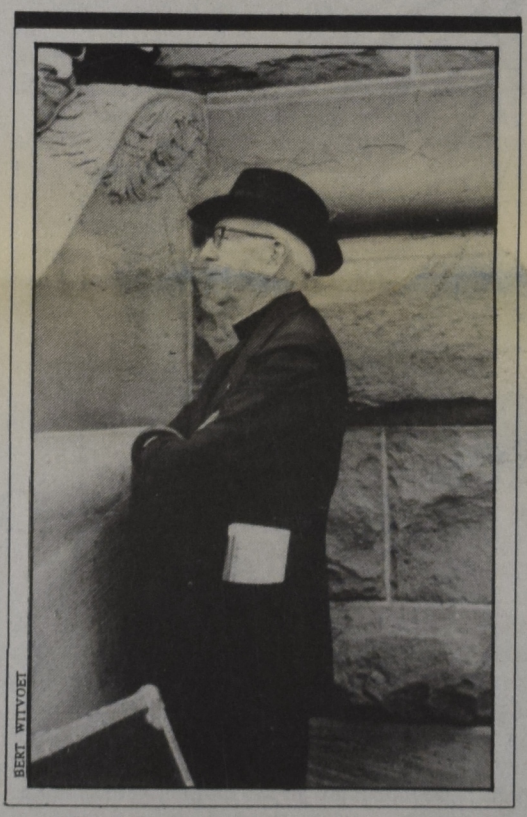
"It would have to be after I finish working the dinner shift."

"No problem. I remain forever the insomniac...."

* * * * *

At eleven that night, Tilden Penfors entered David Glass's ancient, drab apartment through its unlocked front door. He found David working in a dank, cramped studio, sculpting a piece of wet clay. All about the room lay finished pieces of sculpture.

Tilden walked about the room, chin in hand, grunting and hemming and hawing, as he assessed David's work.


BERT WITVOET

Finally, he said, "Everything's quite good indeed, David. You ought to consider putting these things up for sale at Briarly's Starving Artists' Auction this Sunday afternoon."

"Do you think that I could get anything for all this?"

"I'm sure that he would give you a fair commission."

"All right. I'll telephone him tomorrow."

Tilden slapped David's shoulder and said, "How in the world have you been, roomy?"

"It's a miracle that I've survived, as unworldly as I am."

"The last I heard, you were about to drop out of seminary."

"Seminary seemed more worldly than spiritual, I'm afraid."

"We were such idealists then, weren't we?"

"I suppose I still am. And what do you have to say for yourself, Tilden, and the path you've taken?"

"The path of least resistance. If you'd been born into the lower middle class, you might have rejected your idealism long ago, too."

"But you could have succeeded at anything on your own terms."

"Maybe, but I quickly came to terms with the fact that business is business, and that includes Christianity."

"The world has changed, hasn't it?"

"Yes, it's changed me, but not at heart," Tilden said, although he seemed not entirely convinced himself. "Well, I'd better be going now."

As he started for the door, he turned and said, "You really should call Briarly tomorrow about that auction. I hate to see you living in this shabby manner."

Two days later, David hauled his sculptures across town to the Briarly "manor." The rector looked them over with a practiced eye.

"Yes," he said, "a splendid collection. I'll see to it personally that my auctioneer gets top dollar for your work."

That Sunday David stayed away from the auction, realizing at the last moment that he dreaded parting with his sculptures.

Two weeks passed without David's hearing from Briarly. Then, on a Monday at midday, the rector telephoned him at his apartment.

"Young man," he said, "we managed to sell all of your offerings, although we didn't attract as many buyers as we had hoped."

"That's good," David said, "because I have a few bills to pay."

"We'll get that cheque in the mail to you as soon as possible."

"Thank you. Any little bit will help."

"And by the way, my daughter Belle will be visiting us this weekend. I'll mention you to her."

Two days later, David received a cheque for $98 — so little that he felt tempted to throw it into the trash. But at least it will pay the utility bill, he thought. If my work is worth so little, then my life must be nothing but a cruel ioke.

That Saturday morning, Rev. Briarly's daughter Belle telephoned David. She sounded completely unchanged since high school — still sweet-natured and genuine. Thus, when she invited him to her parents' house for that next afternoon, he gladly accepted.

Belle's husband greeted David warmly at the front door and offered a sincere handshake. He led David to the den, where they found the beautiful, ethereal Belle sitting on a couch surrounded by her five young children.

She stood up, took David's hand and said, "I can't believe it's really you. Charles, I had a crush on David when I was sixteen."

"You did? If I'd only known." "I was much to shy to reveal it."

"Tell you what, you two," Charles said, "I'll take the kids outside and leave you to discuss old times."

"Charles is a lucky man," David said, once they were alone. "What I wouldn't do to have a wife as lovely as you, Belle."

"In high school, you could have had any girl you wanted."

"But life isn't high school, I'm afraid. I know that now."

Suddenly, Belle stood up, took David's hand and said, "Oh, let me show you something that reminds me so much of you."

She led him into her father's study and directed his attention to a half-dozen pieces of his own work.

"Yes," she continued, "Father often has these auctions, and he always culls the better pieces before the guests arrive."

"Ive seen these pieces before," David said. "I like them."

"Father says there were some nearly as good that he passed along to a young associate at a small profit — Tilden something, I think. Like Father, he's quite an art collector."

"That would be Tilden Penfors."

"Yes, that's the name. Father's grooming him to become his successor at St. John's."

Douglas Woosley is a full-time writer, former waiter, who lives in Huntsville, Ala.

Feature

Is your religious practice simulacra?

Afshin Yaghtin

Today, we love images for their own sake. Jean Beaudrillard, a French Postmodern theoretician, has a fancy name for this: "simulacra" — the image of an image of an image eternally recycled. This worship of image, or simulacra, is handed down to us through television, movies, advertising and various other media images. It even invades our Christian practice.

I used to go to Christian "house-groups" once a week, and one night, we decided to have a foot-washing ceremony. I used to help lead the group; I was an "intern cell leader." Much of the time I was dismayed at several of the other cell leaders; and looking back, I could have been a bit better myself. It was a circle of problems. Yet it was also a sphere of good influence in which the Holy Spirit was able to do miraculous and extraordinary things, regardless of us.

That night, we all sat in a circle, and after the usual night's prayer and worship — after the acoustic guitar and song sheets and prayers — one of the leaders read the night's verse:

Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set an example, that you also should do as I have done to you (John 13:12-15).

Self-righteousness

We instructed each person to take off his or her shoes and socks. Towels were brought and placed in warm water. We began to wash each other's feet. I was chosen by Chad, another house group leader, and I really didn't want to wash his feet. I thought he was too self-righteous and hypocritical. The modern-day Pharisee, he was uncompromising in his ways, not God's ways, and a strict follower of the letter of the Law. Though he talked of grace, he was lacking in real life experience and compassion.

Of course, I am being hard on Chad, but that was Chad's general image. Did he know what it is like to struggle in sin? I wondered. Of course — but his sins were hidden, and our professed sins were abominable to him.

Still, he had a certain outward appearance of strength and propriety. But if there was "sin in the camp," it must be rooted out and expelled: relationships ought to be immediately severed if there was sin involved; church was to be attended regularly on Sundays; and the Bible must be read nightly, or your soul was not spiritually fit and you were not "walking with God."

The question was always: "How is your walk with the Lord?" If you weren't praying and reading your Bible every night, your walk probably wasn't that good, according to the gospel of Chad and several other "leaders."

A 'cool' ritual

So I washed his feet that night — and I thought I meant it — at least for the sake of the Lord, and then Chad washed my feet. Yet I knew the next day Chad would look at me with a beam in his eye — and I would see him with a log in mine.

It was like that for most of us. Washing each other's feet was just another "cool" spiritual thing to do to prove your closeness with God — to try to live like the Christians in the early church or like the apostles in the book of Acts.

We all meant what we did as much as we could, and weren't fully aware of our lack of depth. We tried, but the symbol is too powerful today; the image is too strong; the *simulacra* has invaded the church also — it has become a lifestyle.

Today's "postmodern" generation of Christians is, at times, lacking in depth, in long lasting commitment. There was never any "follow up" after the foot washing. Chad would never serve me the way that washing of the feet signified, and it would never happen for any of us.

It took years

So we would sing our hosannas and pray our prayers: "O Lord, O Lord God Jesus, O Lord, hear our prayers, break our hearts for you. Make us more like you — make us holy, purify us. O Lord, cleanse us, Jesus."

And we would sing: "Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.... Lord we lift up your name, with our hearts filled with praise. Be exalted, O Lord, my God...."

Yet it would take us years to begin to know and repent of our hardness of mind and heart. And we'd only then begin to see some of our doubts. It would take years for us to admit we had only been trying to convince ourselves by convincing others; and it would take us many more years to call on God and recognize that we hardly meant it, to understand how much doubt we had, and to know that even when we did mean it, it was because of Jesus.

The greatest sinners

The absolute worst has to be when another Christian judges a sister or brother in God with all of his or her ignorance of the state and condition of the world. One thing I am most afraid of is the Christians who have done so little wrong (that they know of), so little "bad" in the way of what is accepted morally by the world — sex, drugs, smoking, drinking, cursing, cheating — but have forgotten a far greater sin: pride.

These are people who have "loved" Jesus all their lives and never said a "bad" word, but sit in judgment over those who are struggling to be like them — like Jesus — but who have struggled and are tormented with their sins.

Not that such sins are good or justifiable; by no means. But on whom did Jesus have the most compassion?

Jesus was a friend of sinners and outcasts because their sins had humbled them, and were often committed with little control or in ignorance of the truth; whereas the Pharisees, the "religious" leaders, knew better and were lacking in compassion and grace. St. Paul counted himself the least worthy of all the saints and the greatest of sinners.

Church can become just something we're involved in to convince other churchgoers of our spirituality. Who is our God? The churchgoer, or Jesus Christ?

If we are going to wash people's feet, we had better make sure we'll be there to serve them in our daily lives, in spirit and in truth. If not, it is better that we not wash their feet at all because the Lord hates broken promises and he is not pleased with external shows: images of devotion.

So I invite you to ask yourself: is what you are doing simulacra or foot washing? Image or the real thing?

Afshin Yaghtin is a 26-year-old graduate student doing MA work in postmodern American literature in Wales. He normally lives in Los Angeles.

Feature

A Haitian odyssey: Birth of an adoptive family

JEFF HOOGENDOORN PHOTOS

Kathleen with her new parents at the orphanage. No smiles yet.

Jeff Hoogendoorn

Our adventure to Port-au-Prince, Haiti, originated from our home nestled among the moss-covered trees of Vancouver Island. From Victoria to rainy Vancouver, through wind-chilled Toronto then icy Montreal, we find ourselves slipping over the island of the Bahamas, verdant green dots in the emerald-colored Caribbean Sea.

The plane banks steeply on our final descent over Haiti. I'm struck not so much by what I see but by the expectations which have been doused; the jagged, scarred mountains resemble more a moonscape than a tropical oasis, as Christopher Columbus once described this place some 500 years ago. The land has been raped of its timber resources, leaving behind only inhospitable dust. Bleached. Sterile.

The hope of adoption

Our child has always been a two dimensional entity, more a subconscious figure than anything real. More fiction than fact. We had met her only in pictures, a few photographs taken under great duress in a country renowned not for its beauty but for its dark, sinister nature of political unrest, fly-by-night dictatorship, tire necklace burnings and abject poverty.

The poverty is marked in our attempts to complete the necessary paperwork prior to leaving Canada. For months, we were frustrated in our attempts to secure a passport for our daughter. Owing to a cash crunch, Haiti had run out of passport books and there was no sense of when new ones might arrive. Weekly telephone calls — when Haiti's phone system was working — afforded us only the weekly response, *"Nous n'avons pas les passeports, Monsieur.*

Running the gauntlet

With only the promise of a passport, we, two of the few token *blancs* on board the plane, find ourselves touching down on the runway of Port-au-Prince airport. Greeted on the tarmac by and RCMP officer, I was not sure if I felt comforted or anxious. We pass unscathed through the airport, the same terminal building in which former dictator Papa Doc Duvalier had a corpse displayed for three days under the sign, "Welcome to Haiti." Such an end for an "enemy" of the state. Upon seeing the barbed-wire U.N. compound with its armed towers, I am sure of my feelings. I am anxious."

Our driver, Tom, is a retired pastor from the American South. He is a jovial figure who describes his work in Haiti as being a "Honey dew." "Honey, do this and Honey, do that," he says with a sheepish grin and a raspy chuckle. He and his wife, Linda, operate a guest house in one of the suburbs of the city.

We traverse the pot-holed roads and rocky side streets of Port-au-Prince, passing countless Haitians milling about in the streets. Street vendors, called *marchandes*, litter the sidewalks and roadways selling dry goods, prepared meat and used clothing. One vendor, crouched frog-like in the dirt, has only a single rusted tin of charcoal for sale — tin not included.

Introductions

Our car stops outside the cinder block walls of a two-storey building. "Well, here we are," beams Tom, "The Rainbow of Love orphanage." Grossly distorted music from a childrens' Christmas party wafts from inside and I'm afraid they won't hear our rapping on the large steel door to the compound. Pat and I look at each other. Nervous. Excited. Apprehensive. Frightened. We had anticipated this day for some two years. Amid the crowd, we were alone in our thoughts.

After a few false starts of "Is she the one?" we spy our very real, three dimensional daughter in the arms of her caregiver. Kathleen, almost two years old, is as shy and demure as her pictures' million words expressed. And twice as beautiful. Her eyes, however, reveal a sad nature, a pitiful expression of a toddler. No amount of coaxing will break Kathleen's insecurity nor produce a smile.

We receive her passport the following day, one promise kept by the government of Haiti. But this is not without its folly. A spelling error on the document would prevent us from obtaining a visa from the Canadian Consulate. It was time to pay a personal visit to our ambassador.

We are greeted at an iron door by a security guard toting a rifle and sporting sunglasses reminiscent of the Tonton Macoutes, the merciless, peasant armed guards of the Duvalier regime whose anonymity and power to torture remained behind dark glasses. With little hassle but after many French pleasantries (no one speaks French except when doing business, as Creole is the lingua franca), we secure Kathleen's visa. It is Christmas Eve.

I suppose "awkward" best describes our rather impromptu meeting with Kathleen's birth mother. Rose has visited her daughter every month in the year since she relinquished her to the care of the Rainbow of Love. Rose has no education. No job. No hope. Her hope for her daughter is in the arms of strangers, *blancs* from a country she will most certainly never see and of which she knows little or nothing.

Rose sits quietly with Kathleen, both rather unsure of each other and seemingly unconnected. *"Puis-je prend une photographe de vous?* I ask of her. *"Oui,"* she sedately responds and I snap some pictures of her and Pat with Kathleen. Two mothers who love one child in very different ways. Rose forever leaves our presence, walking away in the heat and the white dust of Port-au-Prince — expressionless; silent. In giving up a life, she has saved a life.

Other worlds

By receiving Kathleen, we have rescued her from what would most certainly have been a hand-to-mouth existence. Most Haitian women are *marchandes*, doomed to spend their time crouched, tending a small table of goods in the fierce sun by day and candlelight by night. They tend also to do most of the housework: cooking, shopping or doing laundry in nothing more than a roadside ditch, with their dresses tucked between their legs.

Haiti is a country which saps life from its citizens. Junior is a boy of four or five, full of life and vigor who is being "rescued" to France. With his deformed arm and leg, he would most likely have been one of the unfortunates who get anonymously absorbed and forgotten in the chaotic, stench-filled streets of Port-au-Prince.

I see an old man begging on the street outside a bakery. His clothes are in tatters, rotting like much of Port-au-Prince. A festering wound on his leg is bound in bloody rags revealing a huge gash and open flesh. He gives a toothless *"Merci"* with the donation of a few *gourdes*, perhaps enough to buy a handful of rice.

We arrive at the airport with much apprehension. Will our papers all be in order? Will we be detained? We pass the "Welcome to Haiti" sign. The customs officer blankly rubber stamps our passport and takes a copy of Kathleen's visa. *"Passez,"* he remarks flatly. *"C'est tout"* I ask. "Yes, that's it," he replies.

This would prove to be the last time Pat and I would ever mark our lives as being simply the two of us. The plane banks sharply left as we leave the brown hills, the acrid odor of Haiti. Haitians lament that theirs is a country which others simply cannot fathom nor comprehend. I fear it is a country Haitians themselves do not fully understand either.

Even the Duvalier regime, the "Reign of Terror," is looked on with some fondness, a time when (at least civilian) crime was low and Haitian pride (apparently) high. Now Haitians live in the hope of tomorrow; however, many can barely eke out an existence for the day. A country whose hope for the future is to one day leave is a doomed one.

Kathleen is all smiles at her new home in Victoria.

Kathleen is no longer the demure little girl we met six weeks ago. She glitters in smiles and explodes in fits of laughter originating from her toes.

Two weeks that were

Bert Hielema

FOOD IS NOW considered a better medium than drugs to prevent disease and even to cure illness, mainly because it has no side effects, unless, of course, you eat too much, and then the side effects can be seen all around the person.

I hear of more and more people having serious diseases without an apparent cause. Sort of scary. My (totally inexpert) opinion is that many illnesses can be prevented with proper nutrition. In our family we are sold on one of the most popular books on the market called *Prescription for Nutritional Healing*. It has sold millions of copies and, for about $30, is worth every penny.

A while ago, when telling the childrens' story in church, I suddenly developed dizziness. I had to hold on to a pew to steady myself. This happened less than 10 hours after a long day of flying, with several stops. Apparently the difference in atmospheric pressure, as well as my aging body, had thrown the intricate balance in my ears out of wack. This 600-page book recommended that I refrain from coffee (I drink one cup a day) from alcohol (well, two to three glasses of wine per week) and take extra vitamins B, C and E, as well as brewer's yeast. I haven't had the problem again. Next time I fly, I'll chew gum when the plane ascends or descends.

IT'S OFFICIAL: chocolate is good for you. I love chocolate, especially the dark, bittersweet Belgian variety. One store in Belleville seems to have a permanent special on the stuff: 99 cents for 100 grams. And ever since I discovered that chocolate is good for me, I have sneaked in a little piece now and then. Why is it good for you? A group of neuroscientists in San Diego discovered that it contains certain compounds that heighten sensations and euphoria, not unlike that experienced by cannabis users.

Chocolate also affects sexual behavior: findings show that rats copulated more when fed chocolate. No personal comment. It lessens anxiety — and thus works as an anti-depressant — and so gives greater peace of mind. And, of course, it tastes good.

A team in Paris studied 22 people who regularly consumed between 100 and 500 grams of chocolate a day for several years. They found these people very active, physically and mentally, without any anxiety. No insomnia, no weight gain and no withdrawal symptoms. The researchers concluded that chocolate qualifies as an almost ideal soft drug. Will this be the next "drug" test at the Olympics? Something pleasurable, that is good for me! Hmm...; not very Calvinistic!

BOTTLED WATER IS a "vast con," claims an article in *The Guardian Weekly*. My wife and I are on a well, and wherever we go we take our own water along, drawn from a 25-meter deep well which pumps 150 litres per minute through solid granite. Beautiful stuff. I drink some eight glasses a day. Flushes out a lot of toxins this way. However, the stuff you buy in the store has customers paying 700 times more for the same quality as water from the tap, according to the British Water Companies Association (WCA). If household water supplies were charged at the same rate as bottled water, the average family bill in Britain would rise to £ 77,000 per year ($150,000 Cdn). *The Guardian* story claims that tap water is more tightly controlled than bottled water. What I find most telling is the harm the water trade causes to the environment: each year 600,000 tons of plastic bottles have to be disposed in Great Britain alone. Thousands of trucks are used to transport bottled water, using an average of 400 litres of diesel fuel for each trip. Some water sources are as far away as India and Kenya, where there already is a shortage of clean water.

OF ALL THE WAYS to stay fit, walking is the easiest, safest and cheapest. No special equipment needed. A brisk walk at a rate of 1 km every 10 minutes burns nearly as many calories as running the same distance. Recently researchers at the University of Washington linked walking more than four hours a week with reduced risk of heart disease among women and men over 65.

Swing your arms as you walk: this burns off up to 10 per cent more calories. In a different study reported in the *New England Journal of Medicine* older men who walk three km daily sharply reduce their chance of death from all causes, with much lower rates from cancer, heart disease and stroke.

Each day the *Christian Science Monitor* is delivered to me by mail for 50 cents. Good reading, too. I read that a lady named Barbara Mitchell, displeased with the poor service she received in a restaurant in California (where else?), wrote in a tip for one-cent on her credit card. When she received her monthly bill, the tip had been inflated one million times: the waiter had entered 010000 on the computer, which was processed at $10,000. "Next time I'll leave cash," she said.

TALKING ABOUT money: for more than a decade, mother and son Phyllis and Michael Klingebiel in New Jersey shared a monthly ritual: they chipped in $20 each for the "Pick 6" lottery. Late on October 2nd Michael woke his parents with dreamlike news: "Mom, we won $2.17 million."

But when Michael and his wife went to claim the purse, no mention of mother: he refused to share with her. So she is suing him. No wonder that Paul said to Timothy, "The desire of money is the root of all evil."

REGARDING LAWSUITS: last year the three largest jury awards in the U.S. were: $262.5 million to Charleston, S.C., parents whose son was killed because of a faulty Dodge Caravan door latch; $83 million to the family of a woman who died from negligent care at a Texas nursing home; and $75 million to the daughter of a single mother who died when an auto dealer's loaner car ran a red light and broadsided her in Florida.

DO YOU REMEMBER Elton John, who sang "A Candle in the Wind" at Princess Diana's funeral in the Westminster Abbey? Well, he's a big spender. His monthly credit card bill is normally around $600,000. He spent $480,000 in one visit to his London jeweller and $600,000 at his favorite clothes designer, the late Gianni Versace. Recently he ran up bills well over a $1 million in a single day: $245,000 on antiques at one place and $420,000 at another art dealer; then $600,000 for interior designers. He seldom drives but has 20 cars, including four Bentleys, blue, black, silver and azure. Sir Elton has battled addiction to drugs, alcohol, food, and is still addicted to shopping, apparently. Want to trade lives with him? Not me.

HERE ARE SOME actual signs spotted in stores and reported in *USA TODAY:* in a jewelry store: "Ears pierced while you wait"; in a dance hall: "Good clean dancing every night but Sunday"; in a maternity ward: "No children allowed."

REMEMBER WHEN THE word "Yuppie" was coined (Young Urban Professional)? Then came "dinks": double income, no kids. We now have "dimps": double income, money problems; "skippies": school kids with income, purchasing power; and "woopies": well-off older persons. I am sure I could invent a few of my own, such as "biddies": baby boomers in debt; or "orpies": older, rural professionals — something I used to be before retirement. Or "roffies": religious older folk.

THE *NEW YORK TIMES* Magazine reports that Dzerzhinsk, Russia, is the world's least habitable, most polluted city. Once the centre of Soviet chemical weapon production, it has a reservoir of toxic waste which gives the city of 300,000 a life expectancy of only 47 years for women and 42 for men.

Meanwhile, a report from the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, says that foreign officials are marvelling at America's near-complete economic, military and cultural domination of the world. Foreigners remain baffled by the Clinton scandal. One attendee joked: "The French ask why he hasn't had more women; the Africans wonder why he didn't make her pregnant; and the Russians are amazed that the woman is still alive." *Time* magazine has now run its third consecutive Lewinsky cover.

Bert Hielema, who lives in Tweed, Ont., hopes to be at the 100th anniversary of the Abraham Kuyper Stone Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton,N.J., from February 25-28. More news about that in the next instalment.

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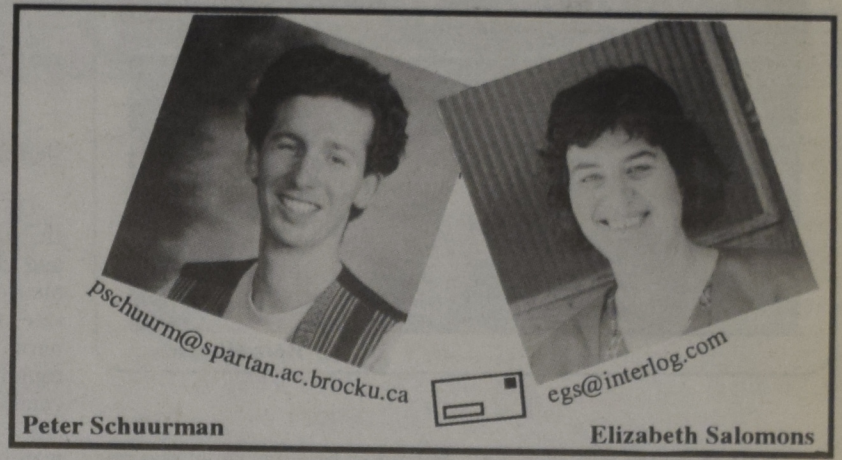
Comment

Are 'Canadian' concerns our concerns?



Peter Schuurman **Elizabeth Salomons**

Dear Elizabeth:

We had a "Days of Action" protest march here at Brock last week, during which students demonstrated against rising tuition costs in Ontario.

Undergraduate tuition has been hiked to $3,234 a year (in 1997) from $1,638 a year in 1990, and it could increase by as much as 10 per cent next year and again the following year. At the same time, government funding of universities is decreasing and programs are being frozen or cut. The atmosphere is anything but hopeful.

You and I have both spent time in numerous post-secondary institutions, both public and private, and I thought we might explore these changes. I recognize that our community has little sympathy for the public university's financial problems, but more and more Reformed Christians are entering the public university, and *Canadian* concerns are gradually becoming *our* concerns.

Peter

Hold on a minute, Peter. Your discussion opener of what's going on in higher education is a valid topic. But although I agree it's a concern, I'm going to put it on the back burner for a minute here and call you on your terminology. Since when are *Canadian* concerns not *our* concerns? Is this how you see yourself in the world? I have a big problem with that. Please enlighten me.

Elizabeth

Whoa. Maybe I'm assuming too much here, but I've never sensed strong concern in Reformed circles for the issues that plague the public education system in Ontario. Our concern has mostly been with regards to issues that affect Christian education, such as public funding, human rights legislation, hiring practices and certification. Any community's primary concerns are always the ones in which they have the largest stake.

Like much of the Christian community, our political awareness goes little further than moral issues. Sure, being Reformed, we have a stronger impetus than most to be interested and active in something as "worldly" as the public area. But being an immigrant community, we have less power and fewer cultural investments in something as big as the public university system.

Our horizons are still widening.

I remember hearing my grandmother talk about the days when they would whisper that "so-and-so is going out with a Canadian." There was "us" and there were "the Canadians." I guess I'm saying that's changing, as the first generation born here grows up through (to some degree) the "Canadian" system.

Peter

Well, Peter, I strongly disagree with you on this one. "Our political awareness goes little further than "moral issues"? This makes me cringe. It also makes me think of how my non-Christian friends and colleagues often (mis)understand Christianity. They see it as a moral code by which I live, and it's so, so much more than that.

Because of this common misinterpretation, and because of how society at large understands the word "moral," I rarely use it.

But maybe this is a good place to jump back to your chosen thread: public versus Christian higher education. If, as you say, Reformed Christians aren't as concerned about the issues facing the public education system (and I'm assuming when you refer to Ontario you don't mean to exclude the rest of Canada, right? Because these aren't just Ontarian problems), then my response is, why not? Shouldn't we be? Isn't it a "moral" issue? And aren't the issues facing the public education system also affecting Christian colleges?

E.

Wow. The ambiguities of e-mail certainly can be dangerous... :-)

My point was not that we *should* be only concerned about moral issues (like homosexuality, gambling, abortion) but that we (right or wrong) *have a tendency* to be more active in these areas than, let's say, what might be called "justice" issues (like native rights, poverty and tuition hikes). Maybe this distinction fails to show how everything is at once a "moral" and "justice" issue, but it highlights a myopia that inflicts much of the Christian community (organizations like CPJ are obviously the exception).

Maybe I'm not being fair. Maybe this is just my (southern, conservative) Ontario-centric bias. :-)

P.

Dangerous, huh? I think I do understand you — I just don't agree with you. I think you're selling our community a little short. (Or maybe I've been living in the 416 area code too long, which I've been told does things to a person!) But seriously, this has always been my perception of how the Christian community involves itself in the Canadian political sphere, no matter what my area code.

I've watched my peers and my elders involve themselves and say to each other and to me: "This needs our attention. We've got to do something." Who started Christian schools and colleges in the first place? What are the Christians serving in our provincial legislatures or national Parliament doing there? What about those of us who volunteer at food banks or work at shelters for the homeless? I don't think these individuals are a minority, do you?

E.

Maybe you're right. There are many dedicated people involved in work with refugees, labor issues, the arts and even politics (we had a CRC member run for mayor here in town). And my roommate is a lawyer!

I guess I was (perhaps too quickly) assuming that it's taken awhile for us to get to this point. I see a gradual process of our immigrant subculture melting deeper into the dominant culture. I still think that the first thing on our minds and hearts are issues that are closest to home. Rising tuition fees for public university students is not one of those. And because we pay exorbitant amounts for the education we receive in the Christian system, we *tend* to be less sympathetic.

P.

Well, I guess I hijacked your agenda for this month and I think we're just about out of room. But maybe the nature of our discussion reflects something important that needs further discussion. In some parts of Canada, the Dutch Reformed community has been here for almost 100 years. At what point do we stop calling ourselves an immigrant community? Is the fact that we have set up Christian schools a factor in our seemingly slow rate to assimilate? Or is it the increasingly multicultural country we live in that encourages us to celebrate our origins?

You and I have discussed similar questions in past letters, but we seem to be coming back to the same issue all the time: who are we? Is this a reflection of our respective, sometimes too-serious natures, or is it indicative of the political and social climate we live in?

Maybe it's time, both as a community and as a country, that we concentrate on how we are the same, not how we are different.

Elizabeth (an unhyphenated Canadian)

Elizabeth Salomons is a freelance editor who lives in Toronto and is a member of First CRC there. Peter Schuurman is the Christian Reformed Church's chaplain at Brock University. He's a member of Jubilee CRC in St. Catharines.

Classifieds

Classified Rates

(Revised February 1, 1995)

Births	$25.00
Marriages & Engagements	$40.00
Anniversaries	$45.00
2-column anniversaries	$90.00
Obituaries	$45.00
Notes of thanks	$35.00
Birthdays	$40.00

All other one-column classified advertisements: $15.00 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is $15.00. Letter under file number $35.00 extra. Photos: $25.00 additional charge.

Note: All rates shown above are GST inclusive

ATTENTION!

a) *Christian Courier* reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format.,

b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is *not* acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.

c) Photographs sent by fax *are not* acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.

d) *Christian Courier* will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.

e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to five column inches. *Christian Courier* reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of $15.00 per column inch (GST incl.).

NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS

We offer a one-year subscription for only $25.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the *Christian Courier* and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose $25.00 and the couple's correct address.

Christian Courier
4-261 Martindale Rd.
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1
Phone: (905) 682-8311
Fax: (905) 682-8313

E-mail: ccadverts@aol.com

Birthdays

SCHINKEL:

With thankful hearts and grateful to the Lord for His loving care, we will celebrate our mother's 99th birthday.

ELIZABETH SCHINKEL

March 7, 1998

May the Lord continue to be with her in her new home "Shalom Manor" is the wish of all her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Her new address is: Shalom Manor, 12 Bartlett Avenue, Grimsby, ON L3M 4N5

Anniversaries

Hippolytushoef, the Neth. — Surrey, B.C.
1953 — February 26 — 1998

With thankfulness in our hearts to God we share with you the news that our parents

SJOUKE (JACK) LEYSTRA
and
EKE (ELLEN) LEYSTRA
(nee OEGEMA)

celebrated their 45th anniversary.

Elly & Steve Hofman
Christi, Jennifer, Matthew, Michael
John Leystra
Janine, Deanna, Braden
Bart & Arlene Leystra
James Leystra
Cameron

Address: 10514 155A St., Surrey, BC V3R 4K7

Tres Arroyos — Thunder Bay
1948 — March 3 — 1998

"Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain" (Ps. 127:1a).

With praise and thanksgiving to God, we joyfully announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents

SIMON and WIETSKE (WILMA) ZWAAL
(nee VIS)

We thank them for their love, support and guidance, and pray that God will continue to bless them with health and His special peace. With love and congratulations from your three daughters and their families.

Lucia & Fred Kloosterhuis — Thunder Bay, Ont.
Lisa, Chris & Bobbi-Lee, Kenneth (deceased)
Great-grandsons Matthew and Branden
Elena & Peter Hoogsteen — Thunder Bay, Ont.
Roberta & Steve, Ian, Sheri
Great-grandson Tyson
Geraldina & Rav Schuurman — Hamilton, Ont.
Lori-Ann, Andrea, Raymond

Address: R.R. #6, Thunder Bay, ON P7C 5N5

Miscellaneous

ONE TO ANOTHER

Christian companion magazine. Hundreds of readers Canada-wide. Single issue $5.

Write to:
#12 923 2nd Ave. S.
Lethbridge, AB T1J 0C7

Offering 7% on 3 year loan money for successful real estate partnership.
(403) 449-6143

For Sale: JOHANNUS Sweelinck III Organ. 3-Man, 32-note AGO pedal, 52-stops etc. Dealer demo. Full warranty. Suitable for church or home. Ext. channels available.
Call (519) 688-3540.

Anniversaries

PHOTO BY HAIDE

Congratulations to Harke and Sophie van der Meulen on their 50th anniversary!

Kollumerzwaag, the Neth. — Smithers, B.C.
1948 — March 18 — 1998

With praise and thanksgiving to God, we joyfully celebrate the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents

HARKE and SOPHIE VAN DER MEULEN
(nee BEERDA)

Thank you for your years of love and support. Our prayer is that the Lord will continue to bless you.

Ken & Joanne van der Meulen — Smithers, B.C.
Jared, Tyler
Mike & Judy van der Meulen — Smithers, B.C.
Jenna, Kelsey, Colton
Sharon van der Meulen — Smithers, B.C.
Jackie & Leo Barendregt — Smithers, B.C.
Mitchell, Darryl, Kyle
Roy van der Meulen — Cumberland, B.C.

Home address: Box 2410, Smithers, BC V0J 2N0

Aalten, the Neth. — Wellington, Ont.
1958 — March 5 — 1998

With much joy and thankfulness to our Lord, we celebrate the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents

JOHN and GERDA NYMAN
(nee RENSINK)

Our prayer is that God will continue to bless them with health and happiness in the years to come.

With love from your children.

Joanne & Mike Veenstra — Bloomfield, Ont.
Steven
Henry & Geraldine Nyman — Waterdown, Ont.
Mark, Craig, Trevor
Rob & Grace Nyman — Troy, Ont.
Merissa, Amanda, Kelly
Evelyn & Harry Veenstra — Bloomfield, Ont.
Adam, Rebecca

Home address: Box 403, Wellington, ON K0K 3L0

For Rent

APARTMENTS: Redeemer College rents furnished 1, 2, and 4 bedroom apartments, May to August. Enjoy our pastoral setting while visiting the Hamilton/Niagara/Toronto region. For excellent daily, weekly and monthly rates, and for reservations, phone
(905) 648-2131, ext. 260.

For rent: Country home situated **near Tillsonburg, Ont.** Livestock barns may also be rented. Within minutes drive to church. Reasonable rates. Inquire at **(519) 849-6789.**

Obituaries

The Lord called home
JANTJE DIEMER
after a lengthy illness.

She died peacefully in her sleep on Feb. 9, 1998.

Born in Beilen, the Neth., on Sept. 6, 1907, she moved to Canada with her family in 1951.

She was predeceased by her husband Geert, with whom she shared 61 years of marriage.

She is survived by her children:
Henny — the Neth.
Helen du Cloux (George) — Alberta
Jans (Ginnie) — Victoria, B.C.
Johan (Lydia) — Victoria, B.C.
Harry (Christine) — Victoria, B.C.
18 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

We wish to thank the dedicated staff and volunteers of the Mount Tolmie Hospital and the Saanich Peninsula Hospital for the warm and excellent care given to our Mother over her last years.

A funeral service was held on Feb. 20, 1998, at 11 a.m., at St. Stephens Church, 7921 St. Stephens Rd., Saanichton, B.C.

Job Opportunities

Full-time salesclerk for rural hardware and farm supply store. Must be energetic and self-motivated with good communication skills. Knowledge of residential and commercial plumbing and heating supplies an asset. Send resume to **Wellandport Home Hardware, Box 100, 5157 Canborough Rd., Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0,**
Fax: (905) 386-6918.

Obituaries

Andijk, the Neth. — Grimsby, Ont.
Feb. 1, 1907 - Feb. 14, 1998

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you" (John 14: 1-2).

On Feb. 14, 1998, in her 92nd year, the Lord took home our dear Mother, Grandmother and Great-grandmother

GRIETJE VANDERLEEK
(MANTEL)

Loving wife of the late Gerbrand VanderLeek (1992).

Dear Mother of:
Kees & Dorothy VanderLeek — St. Catharines, Ont.
Nelly & Henk Hornsveld — Hamilton, Ont.
Thea & Bob Kempenaar — Vineland, Ont.
Pieter & Joke VanderLeek — Langley, B.C.

She will be sadly missed by her 16 grandchildren, 26 great-grandchildren, and her sister Siem Mantel of the Netherlands.

Grietje was predeceased by her four brothers and two sisters.

The funeral took place on Tuesday, Feb. 17, 1998, at Mountainview Chr. Ref. Church, Grimsby, Ont., Rev. J. Van Weelden officiated.

Correspondence address: Henk and Nelly Hornsveld, 1693 Upper Wellington St., Hamilton, ON L9B 1P1

For Rent

Bachelor apartment for rent **north of Toronto**, near public transportation. Fridge, stove and laundry facilities. $525 inclusive. Available immediately. **Call (905) 737-5536.**

Classifieds

Obituaries

Assen Brampton
the Neth. Ont.
Feb. 14, 1931 - Dec. 20, 1997

On Dec. 20, 1997, the Lord in his infinite wisdom called home our deeply loved Mother and Grandmother

ROELY BOOTSMA
(JANSSENS)

Much loved Mother of:
Clarence Bootsma — Brampton, Ont.
Andy & Lori Bootsma — Ajax, Ont.
Gloria & Steve Ryan — Brampton, Ont.
Tyler, Sarah
and Jeremy (deceased)
Ed & Wanda Bootsma — Edmonton, Alta.
Ruby
Sister of:
Gay Janssens (Hendricks) — Huntsville, Ont.
Hilda Janssens (DeJong) — Hamilton, Ont.
Henry & Leni Janssens — Ancaster, Ont.
Andy & Dea Janssens — Hamilton, Ont.
Helen & Jack Hagen — Hamilton, Ont.
Jane & Pete Elgersma — Hamilton, Ont.
Harry & Mary Janssens — Vineland, Ont.
Ralph & Dorothy Janssens — Wellandport, Ont.
24 nieces and nephews.
Sister-in-law of:
Murkje & Ate Terpstra — Dronrijp, Fr., the Neth.
George & Rena Bootsma — Escondido, Calif.
Simon & Linda Bootsma — Aurora, Ont.
Shirley & Pete Pyl — Enumclaw, Wash.
Dirkje & Henk DeBoer — Balk, Fr., the Neth.
20 nieces and nephews.
Roely was predeceased by her husband Elwood, grandson Jeremy and brothers Henk and John.
"The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth and even for evermore" (Ps. 121:8).
Correspondence address:
Gloria Ryan, 62 Wellington Street W., Brampton, ON L6Y 1K9

Obituaries

Kortehemmen, Fr. Wyoming
the Neth. Ont.
June 23, 1900 - Feb. 6, 1998

JOHN VANDERWAL

God saw you getting tired
when a cure was not to be
So he closed his arms around you
and whispered, 'Come to me.'

Predeceased by his dear wife Geeske VanderWal (Taekema), son Halbe (1985), daughter-in-law Anna (1993) and grandson John (1994).
Dear father of:
Mel & Sadie VanderWal — Clinton, Ont.
Aukje VanderWal (Feenstra)
Stanley & Evelyn VanderWal — Goderich, Ont.
John & Dorothy VanderWal — Camlachie, Ont.
Wilco & Donna VanderWal — Sarnia, Ont.
Harvey & Marie VanderWal — Forest, Ont.
Brother of Sietse VanderWal of the Netherlands, sister Janke Boersma of Wyoming, Ont.
34 grandchildren, 80 great-grandchildren and 14 great-great-grandchildren.
Funeral service was held in the Wyoming Chr. Ref. Church at 2 p.m., on Feb. 10, 1998, Rev. Ken Benjamins officiating.
Correspondence address:
Mel VanderWal, R.R. 3, Clinton, ON N0M 1L0

Grootegast, Gr. Grimsby
the Neth. Ont.
Sept. 13, 1919 - Feb. 8, 1998

Our father in His infinite wisdom called to His eternal home, after a long struggle against Parkinson's disease, from Shalom Manor, on His day Sunday, Feb. 8, 1998, His child

ALBERTUS VELDSTRA

Devoted and loving husband of 50 years of Jansje Veldstra-Hansman.
Cherished father and Opa of:
Ria & Jim Wharrie — Stoney Creek, Ont.
Lynn-Ann & Bill Martin (Becky, Nicholas), Wendy, James
Albert & Akiko — Toronto, Ont.
Marg & Bob Thiel — Brantford, Ont.
Martin, Peggy, David Vreugdenhil
Karen, Michael, Steven Thiel
Brother of:
Sid & Hilda — Brampton, Ont.
John & Shirley — Caledonia, Ont.
Itske & Nelly — Cayuga, Ont.
Predeceased by his oldest brother Albert, his only sister and her husband, Tina and George Van Lenthe, and son-in-law Nick Vreugdenhil.
Our loved one's passages of comfort were H.C. Lord's Day 1 and the 23rd Psalm.
Correspondence address:
Jansje Veldstra, 251 McNeilly Rd., Stoney Creek, ON L8E 5H2

Employment Wanted

Serious hard working **Dutch young man** (18) is **looking for a job (at short notice) on a crop- or dairy farm in Canada** for about half a year. Speaks English. Waiting for your reaction. **Martin Chr. Bouwman, Ermelo, the Netherlands.**
Phone 011-31-34-1551816 (home)
Phone 011-31-35-5415252 (office)

Job Opportunities

Help wanted: **Class "A" mechanic needed**. Please send or fax resume, or apply to: **Clarence's Service Centre Ltd., 801 Canboro Rd., P.O. Box 129, Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0. Fax: (905) 892-4828.**

Take action!
Place an ad in our
Business Directory.

Teachers

ALLISTON, Ont.: Alliston Community Chr. School invites applicants for a **1-year maternity leave contract position** teaching grades 5 and 6. Preference given to candidates whose qualifications include French and Music. A.C.C.S. serves approx. 100 students in a growing community 1 hour north of Toronto. Send resumes to:
Mr. T.J. Tristram, Principal
P.O. Box 592
Alliston, ON L9R 1V7

BARRIE, Ont.: Timothy Chr. School is accepting applications for **possible openings in the primary department**. Timothy is a school experiencing strong growth. Applicants must be able to articulate a rich Christian perspective and have had experience with young children. Capabilities in French, fine arts, or computers are preferred. Please direct your resume to:
Mrs. Jane Tjeerdsma
c/o Timothy Christian School
49 Ferris Lane
Barrie, ON L4M 2Y1
Only suitable applicants will be contacted.

CALGARY, Alta.: Trinity Chr. School is seeking a **grade 6 and 7** teacher. Contact:
Stan Hielema, Principal
#100, 295 Midpark Way SE
Calgary, AB T2X 2A8
Phone (403) 254-6682
Fax (403) 254-9843
E-mail: trinity@spots.ab.ca

LACOMBE, Alta.: Lacombe Chr. School, approx. 371 students in K-9, located in Central Alberta, invites applications from qualified teachers for a **junior high social studies - language arts position** (1 year maternity) and possible upper elementary positions. Applicants must qualify for Alberta teacher certification. Please send resume and letter of application to:
Martin Folkerts
Lacombe Chr. School
5206-58 Street
Lacombe, AB T4L 1G9
Phone: (403) 782-6531
Fax: (403) 782-5760

VERNON, B.C.: The Vernon Chr. School is seeking the services of a **teacher at the Middle School level** for the fall of 1998. We are specifically looking for **expertise in the area of PE and Computer Education**. This position requires someone who enjoys working in a team situation and is a well-organized self-starter. Vernon Chr. School is a parent-operated school, serving a diverse Christian community in the sunny Okanagan Valley of British Columbia. Send resumes to:
Mr. Larry Simpson, Principal
Vernon Christian School
6890 Pleasant Valley Road
Vernon, BC V1B 3R5

Silvercrest Christian School

Wasaga Beach, Ont.

is seeking applications for the possible position of

PRINCIPAL

starting August 1, 1998

Silvercrest Christian School, established in 1978, is an interdenominational school offering an educational program from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 8.
We are seeking a Principal to guide our children in a Christian atmosphere and to direct the operation of our school within both the Christian and the wider community. This position includes both teaching and administrative responsibilities.
Silvercrest Christian School is located in Wasaga Beach, a thriving community, just over an hour from Toronto.
Interested candidates are invited to submit a letter of application and a resume by **March 15, 1998**, to:

SCS Principal Search Committee
c/o Linda Haverkamp
R.R. 1, Phelpston, ON L0L 2K0
Fax: (705) 322-0060

Silvercrest Christian School is a member of the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools.

Teacher Openings

Chatham Christian School is a scripturally-directed and academically excellent Kindergarten to Grade 7 school with an enrolment of 210 students. Our mission is to graduate students who will seek to serve God in all aspects of their lives. Chatham Christian has been in operation since 1957. In September 1999, we hope to move into a new facility.

Chatham Christian School will have two openings for the 1998-1999 school year.

1. We are seeking a **qualified primary teacher** for a **full-time Grade 2 position**.
2. We are also seeking a **full-time teacher's aide** to assist with a large **Grade 1** class.

We invite qualified persons to submit a letter of application, a resume, and a statement of Christian philosophy of education to:

Rick Klooster, Principal
Chatham Christian School
72 Tissiman Ave., Chatham, ON N7M 4G5

Principal

The Red Deer Chr. School has a definite opening for a Principal for the 1998/99 school year (to cover a leave of absence). This position includes some teaching responsibilities at the Junior High level. Interested individuals should forward their resumes/applications to the **Red Deer Chr. School, 5210-61 Street, Red Deer, AB T4N 6N8; Fax (403) 347-3003. Attention: Mr. R. Duggan, before Feb. 20, 1998.** We also have **possible openings at the primary, intermediate and junior levels**. Interested individuals should forward their resumes/applications to the above address before March 6, 1998.

Classifieds

Teachers

LANGLEY, B.C.
Langley Christian Schools
We are accepting applications for both Middle School (gr. 6-8) and High School (gr. 9-12) positions for the 1998-99 school year. Applicants need to send a resume, statement of educational philosophy and teaching evaluation reports. Eligibility for BC teaching certification is required. Positions in the following areas may be required:

MIDDLE SCHOOL:
* Grade 6 or 7
* Grade 8 Humanities (English/ Socials)
* Grade 8 math/science
* Middle School Curriculum Co-ordinator/Vice-Principal

HIGH SCHOOL:
* Computer Studies (gr. 6-12)
* Physics/Chemistry
* Marketing/Accounting
* Math
* English

Send applications to:
Leo Smit or Peter Van Huizen
Langley Christian School
22702-48th Avenue
Langley, BC V2Z 2T6
Phone: (604) 533-0839
Fax: (604) 533-0842
E-mail: LCSMH@Axionet.com

LACOMBE, Alta.: Central Alberta Chr. High School anticipates hiring a **part-time teacher** (.5-.75) for 1998/99. This position is required as a result of adding a second Grade 12 class to our high school. Consider joining an encouraging society, which together with an excellent staff, works to provide an education rooted in the Reformed tradition to 120+ high school students. We invite those with **experience and/or expertise in arts/humanities and/or computer/business education** to apply. However, we will consider all applicants who are willing and able to teach a variety of core subjects. Applicants should preferably be graduates of a Christian college and/or have teaching experience in a Christian high school. Eligibility for an Alberta Teaching Certificate is required. Please send resumes to:

Jack Vanden Pol, Principal
Central Alberta Chr. High School
22 Eagle Rd., Lacombe, AB T4L 1G7
Phone: (403) 782-4535
Fax: (403) 782-5425
E-mail: cach@telusplanet.net

KITCHENER, Ont.: Laurentian Hills Chr. School invites applications for a **possible full-time primary position** for the 1998-1999 school year beginning in September. Please send your resume on or before **March 28** to:

Mr. Luke Janssen, Principal
Laurentian Hills Chr. School
11 Laurentian Drive
Kitchener, ON N2E 1C1

DORDT COLLEGE

Faculty Positions

Business Administration Fall 1998

Qualifications: M.B.A. with relevant experience or Ph.D. in business administration.

Economics Fall 1999
Potential Economics Opening Fall 1998

Qualifications: Ph.D. in economics preferred, demonstrated teaching excellence.

To receive application materials and a detailed job description, qualified persons committed to a Reformed biblical perspective and educational philosophy are encouraged to send a curriculum vitae/resume and a letter of interest which provides evidence of that commitment to:

Rockne McCarthy,
Vice-President for Academic Affairs
Dordt College
498 4th Ave. NE, Sioux Center, IA 51250
facsimile: 712-722-4496
e-mail: vpaa@dordt.edu

Dordt College is an equal opportunity institution that encourages the nominations and candidacies of women, minorities and disabled persons.

Inviting Applications

Timothy Christian School, Toronto (Rexdale), Ontario

invites applications from **qualified and experienced junior level teachers** for the 1998/99 school year. TCS is a west end Toronto school with an enrolment of approximately 200 students, and a staff of 12 teachers. We have a full computer lab, an art, music, and accelerated reading program, and a student population rich in cultural and denominational diversity.

If you are interested in joining our teaching team, send your application to:

Coby Jonker, Principal
Timothy Christian School
28 Elmhurst Dr., Rexdale, ON M5W 2J5
Phone: (416) 741-5770 or Fax: (416) 741-3359

Teacher Openings

Dundas Calvin Christian School invites applications for **2 definite full-time primary positions** and **one or more anticipated full-time/part-time positions at the junior and intermediate levels.** Also a possible vacancy for a part-time (65%) remedial position. Preference will be given to applicants who:

* have completed 4 or more of the courses required for a CSTC;
* are computer literate in W-95;
* are committed to a Reformed world and life view.

At the primary level, the candidates must have a good grasp on the teaching of reading and the use of phonics. The candidates chosen must be willing to assume a leadership role in the school's reading program. Applicants for the other levels must be able to teach French and keyboarding, in addition to the regular classroom subjects.

Please submit your applications to: **Mr. Jack Zondag, Dundas Calvin Christian School, 542 Ofield Rd. N., R.R. 2, Dundas, ON L9H 5E2. For further information phone: (905) 627-1411.**

Teacher Openings

Bowmanville, Ont.

Are you:
* an enthusiastic Christian who loves God and notices His influence in your life?
* a person who genuinely loves children and is interested in shaping them to be compassionate Christians?
* excited about developing your skills as an excellent teacher?
* an individual who would enjoy being part of a dynamic team of teachers?

Knox Christian School is interested in people who have those qualities. Due to increased enrolment and a maternity leave, we are interested in teachers for both the junior and primary divisions for the 1998-99 school year. Please forward your letter of application and resume to:

George Petrusma, Principal, Knox Christian School, 410 Scugog Street, Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K2, phone: (905) 623-5871 or fax: (905) 623-8877.

TEACHER OPENINGS

Abbotsford Chr. School is accepting applications from teachers for openings at its three campuses beginning in the 1998/99 school year. Applicants must support the mission of the school in word and deed and have B.C. teacher certification or quality for it. ACS is an interdenominational parent-run school serving 1200 students at three campuses. Contact the appropriate campus for details.

Clayburn Hills Campus K-7:
- **Vice-Principal**, with duties in curriculum and staff development (30% + 70% teaching) (closing date for VP, March 5)
- **Learning assistance co-ordinator**
- **Primary grades teacher** (1 year term)
- **Music teacher** (prefer familiarity with Kodaly methodology) 1 year term.

Contact: Ed Noot, Principal
3939 Old Clayburn Rd., Abbotsford, BC V3G 1J9
Phone: (604) 850-2694

Heritage Campus:
- **2.5 positions in Kindergarten, 4, 5 or 6.**
- **Full-time Special education co-ordinator** (closing date, March 5)

Contact: Lloyd Den Boer, Principal
2884 Mission Hwy., Abbotsford, BC V2S 3Y2
Phone: (604) 850-5022

Secondary Campus (8-12):
- **Four full-time positions** and **one part-time** one are available in combinations of the following areas: academic and career counselling, choral music (one course), science, math, French, P.E., athletic director, business education, social studies.

Contact: Dwight Moodie, Principal
35011 Old Clayburn Rd., Abbotsford, BC V2S 7L7
Phone: (604) 850-5342

Business Opportunity

Looking for a **Diesel Equipment Mechanic** (preferably licenced), to partly or entirely buy out retiring owner of mobile truck-transport-equipment repair business (established over 15 years). Home + 5 acres available near Hwy. 401. OAC - Ideal for younger energetic reliable couple who want their own business. Present owner willing to assist up to three months if necessary. Capital investment required.

Call 1-613-392-0091 for details and appointment.

Classifieds

Teachers

BURLINGTON, Ont.: Trinity Chr. School invites **teaching applications for a maternity leave for Grade 4.** This position will be for the 1998-1999 school year beginning in September. Special consideration will be given to those applicants who possess their Christian School Teacher's Certificate. The position is for a full-time teacher. Please send your resume on or before March 12, 1998, to:

Mr. Andrew Straatsma, Principal
Trinity Christian School
650 Walkers Line
Burlington, ON L7N 2E7

NEWMARKET, Ont.: Holland Marsh Distr. Chr. School has **possible openings in all divisions.** We especially need someone with strengths in computer and/or music in the intermediate grades. Come and teach in a well-established school just north of Toronto. Do you love children? The Lord? Want to teach Christianly? Please send your application to:

Henry Lise, Principal
HMDCS
18955 Dufferin St., R.R. #2
Newmarket, ON L3Y 4V9
Fax: (905) 775-2395

STRATFORD, Ont.: Stratford Distr. Chr. School. We have a **possible opening for a full-time Grade 5/6 teacher** in September of 1998. Please send your resume for this position by **March 6, 1998**, to:

Mr.Edward Petrusma, Principal
Stratford Distr. Chr. School
R.R. #1, 130 Huron Rd.
Sebringville, ON N0K 1X0
Phone: (519) 393-5675
Fax: (519) 393-6306

THUNDER BAY, Ont.: Thunder Bay Chr. School invites applications for **possible openings in grades 1-8.** Those teachers with specialized areas of French and music are encouraged to apply. Send resume to:

Thunder Bay Chr. School
R.R. #2, Arthur St. W.
Thunder Bay, ON P7C 4V1
or fax (807) 939-2843

WINDSOR, Ont.: Maranatha Chr. Academy. A position will be open due to anticipated enrolment increases. Applicants with **expertise in computer assisted education and music will receive priority.** If you are suitably qualified to teach **Grade 3** and have a vision for Christian education please forward your resume and request application forms from:

Wm. A. Van Dyke, Principal
939 Northwood Street
Windsor, ON N9E 2B4
Phone: (519) 966-7424
Fax: (519) 966-9519
e-mail: wvan@wincom.net

PACIFIC CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
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Come to the beautiful West Coast and join a dynamic and enthusiastic staff in an exciting, interdenominational K-12 school system growing to 750 students in the fall.

TEACHERS REQUIRED FOR 1998/99 SCHOOL YEAR:
* 2-3 Elementary classroom teachers (grades 1-5)
* One part-time elementary French & music
* Secondary art and home economics
* Secondary girls counsellor
* Secondary band/choir

Teachers must be committed Christians and certifiable by the B.C. College of Teachers.

Send letter of application, resume and statement of faith to:

Bill Helmus, Elementary Principal
Pacific Christian School
671 Agnes Street
Victoria, BC V8Z 2E7
Phone: (250) 479-9365
Fax: (250) 479-3685

John Messelink, Secondary Principal
Pacific Christian School
654 Agnes Street
Victoria, BC V8Z 2E6
Phone: (250) 479-4532
Fax: (250) 479-3511

Church Position Available

The **Immanuel Chr. Ref. Church of Hamilton, Ont.**, is seeking a **Senior Pastor** due to the retirement of our present pastor on **Sept. 1, 1998.** We are a congregation of 654 members, located in a residential neighborhood near the Christian elementary school, the Christian high school, and Redeemer College. We desire a pastor who can challenge us through effective preaching, equip us through teaching and training, and who has a passion for outreach. The pastor must be a team player with other ministry staff. A church profile is available upon request. For more information, contact **Herman Proper, Chairperson of the Search Committee, 617 Hwy. #53 East, Ancaster, ON L9G 3K9 or telephone (905) 648-0604 (Res.); (905) 648-2100 (Bus.) or Fax: (905) 648-2110.**

NURSERY/GREENHOUSE HELP

Wholesale nursery, growing ground covers, flowering shrubs, evergreens, flowering vines and perennial flowers will be hiring additional staff for spring. Employment is needed in potting, tagging, shipping, tying and propagation. Work involves both being inside and outside. **Full-time and seasonal employment.** Wages and positions commensurate with experience. Resumes may be dropped off at **Willowbrook Nurseries Inc., 1000 Balfour St., Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0, attention Jane Broere.**

Financial Assistance

Persons from congregations in **Classis Niagara** who are planning to study or are presently studying for full-time ministry in the Chr. Ref. Church as a pastor and/or evangelist and who are in need of financial assistance for the 1998-1999 academic year are invited to contact the secretary of the Student Fund Committee: **Louie VanderBerg, 1662 Second Ave., R.R. #3, St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9**
Fax: (905) 641-4624.
Application form deadline is **April 10, 1998.**

Request for quotation

Shalom Manor, a 132-bed Long Term Care Facility located in **Grimsby, Ont.**, is inviting **quotations from architects** with design and construction experience in long-term care facilities for the preparation of a Master Plan. This Master Plan will address the future needs of Shalom Manor, together with a linked multi-unit retirement complex to be constructed adjacent to the facility. Terms of Reference/Specifications may be obtained by contacting: **Mr. Melis Koomans, at (905) 945-9631,fax (905) 945-1211. Quotations must be received by 2 p.m., March 12, 1998, at 12 Bartlett Avenue, Grimsby, Ont.** The lowest or any bidder not necessarily accepted.

Send your questions to Peter and Marja Confidentiality is assured.

Caring for God's Creation

A Conference on Faith and the Environmental Professional

featuring:
Dr. Calvin DeWitt, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Dr. Fred Van Dyke, Northwestern College, Iowa

May 22-24, 1998

The King's University College
Edmonton, Alberta

Contact: Jerry Mathis, Conference Secretary
Phone: (403) 465-8304; Fax: (403) 465-3534
email: jmathis@kingsu.ab.ca
www.kingsu.ab.ca

Spring Concerts of Praise!

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Choirs, concert band & Kooij Sisters
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under the direction of ***Leendert Kooij***
with ***Andre Knevel*** *at the organ*
Admission: Adults $10.00; Students $6.00
(Grimsby only: $8.00)
Children under 12 are FREE.

April 4, Trenton, King St. United, (613) 392-5274
April 18, Grimsby, Mountainview CRC, (905) 309-0853
April 25, Port Perry, Port Perry United, (905) 986-5856

Praising God with all of our hearts!

Classifieds

Teachers

VANCOUVER, B.C.: Vancouver Chr. School, a denominationally diverse community which offers Kindergarten through Grade 10, has **potential openings** in the following areas: **primary classroom; primary music; middle school classroom (grades 6-10)** with a physical education background. Please send your resume to:

Ron Donkersloot, Principal
Vancouver Christian School
3496 Mons Drive
Vancouver, BC V5M 3E6
No applications by fax, please.

HAMILTON, Ont.: Calvin Chr. School invites teachers to apply for a **possible opening at the primary level (grades 1-3)**, as well as a **possible 40% position at the grade 7 and 8 level.** Preference for the grade 7 and 8 position will be given to the candidate with a science and computer background. Please send resume to:

Mr. Ted J. Postma, Principal
547 West 5th St.
Hamilton, ON L9C 3P7
Phone: (905) 388-2645
Fax: (905) 388-2769
Deadline for applications is **March 23, 1998.**

Teachers

WYOMING, Ont.: John Knox Chr. School invites applications for a **full-time as well as a part-time Junior Grades teacher** for the 1998-99 school year. Interested individuals should forward their resumes to:

William Hordyk, Principal
Box 81
Wyoming, ON N0N 1T0
Phone: (519) 845-3112
Fax: (519) 845-3112

Job Opportunities

SOCIAL SERVICE WORK —
Become a part of our team of committed professionals providing loving care to needy children.
Mutual Support Systems, a parent model network of rural group homes in the Niagara peninsula for children experiencing emotional and behavioral difficulties is accepting applications for **foster parents and group home parents**. For more information about our program, including salary and benefits, please call or write:

Personnel Manager
Mutual Support Systems
P.O. Box 397
Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0
Phone: (905) 892-4332

Miscellaneous

By Grace Alone

The musical debut of **Christian contemporary musician Darrin Berg** has now sold thousands of copies all across North America. Darrin Berg has been featured in *Christian Courier*, *Images*, CJMR-AM 1320, CJIL (The Miracle Channel), City-TV and has performed in over 100 churches and schools across Canada.
See Darrin Berg live at *The Forum* in Cambridge, Ont., on Saturday, March 28, 1998, at 7 p.m. (1001 Langs Drive, Cambridge, Ont.). To order "By Grace Alone," send $14.99 (plus $3.00 for shipping) to **D. Berg Music, 70 Chavender Place, Woodbridge, ON L4L 1K5 or call (905) 264-0676.**

Church News

Christian Reformed Church

Calls extended:
— Nobleford, Alta., **Dr. Warren H. Lammers** of Platte, S. Dak.

Calls accepted:
— John Calvin, Truro, N.S., **Evangelist Henry Boehm.**

Miscellaneous

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Events

Calendar of Events

Please submit only brief items. Placement is subject to space availability. Lengthy, multiple-event announcements will be rejected. We reserve the right to edit the material and to charge a nominal, per issue fee per item inserted.

March 7 Jennifer and Franklin Famme and Jonathan Oldengarm (piano and organ) in concert, 8 p.m., Trinity United Church, **Listowel**, Ont.

March 8 Dutch worship service led by Rev. Henry R. De Bolster, 3 p.m., CRC, **Ancaster**, Ont.

March 10 Organist Jonathan Oldengarm in recital, 12 noon, St. Paul's Cathedral, **London**, Ont. Info.: (519) 338-3214.

March 11 Organist Jonathan Oldengarm in concert, 12 noon, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, **Kitchener**, Ont. Info.: (519) 338-3214.

March 13 Author Rudy Wiebe, two-time winner of the Governor General's Award for Fiction, will discuss "Finding a Writer's Life," 8 p.m., Toronto United Mennonite Church, 1774 Queen St., East, **Toronto**, Ont. Sponsored by the Institute for Christian Studies' ART TALKS! series. Info.: (416) 979-2331, ext. 225.

March 13-14 The Woodstock Dutch Theatre Group presents the three-act comedy "Voor Hete Vuren," 8 p.m., Market Centre Theatre, **Woodstock**, Ont. (Matinee March 14, at 2 p.m.) Tickets/Info.:(519) 283-6285 (#)

March 20-21 The Woodstock Dutch Theatre Group presents the three-act comedy "Voor Hete Vuren," 8 p.m., Dutch Canadian Hall, **London**, Ont. Tickets/Info.: (519) 283-6285 (#)

March 21 The Brampton/Georgetown Christian Male Choir "The Choraliers" in concert, featuring the renowned organist Chris Dawes together with Toronto's "Trillium Brass Quintet." At 8 p.m., Second CRC, **Brampton**, Ont. Tickets/info.: (905) 793-6158.

March 22 Organ recital by Jonathan Oldengarm, 3 p.m., Central Presb. Church, **Hamilton**, Ont. Info.: (519) 338-3214.

March 27 WLU Early Music Ensemble performs Buxtehude cantatas, 8 p.m., Maureen Forrester Recital Hall, Wilfrid Laurier University, **Waterloo**, Ont. Info.: (519) 338-3214.

March 28 See contemporary musician Darrin Berg live at "The Forum," **Cambridge**, Ont. (1001 Langs Drive). Info.: (905) 264-0676 (#)

March 30 A "Reading" by Dordt College's James C. Schaap, 8 p.m., Redeemer College Art Gallery, **Ancaster**, Ont.

March 30 Jonathan Oldengarm's organ graduation recital, 8 p.m., St. George's Anglican Church, **Guelph**, Ont. Info.: (519) 338-3214.

March 31-April 4 The RC Theatre Dept. announces its theatre tour in southern Ontario of Raymond Louter's mainstage performance "Stranger in the Land," a compilation of stories of Dutch immigrants taking place during and shortly after WWII. RC Auditorium dates: **March 31:** 8 p.m. (preview); **April 1-12:** noon (matinee); **Apr. 2, 3, 4:** 8 p.m., at Redeemer College, **Ancaster**, Ont.

April 4 The Woodstock Dutch Theatre Group presents the three-act comedy "Voor Hete Vuren," 8 p.m., Heritage Christian School, **Jordan**, Ont. Tickets/Info.: (519) 283-6285 (#)

April 4 Spring concert by the OCMA (Leendert Kooij, director), 8 p.m., King St. United Church, **Trenton**, Ont. Info.: (613) 392-3020 (#).

April 12 "Nederlandse Paaszangdienst," 7:30 p.m., Emmanuel Ref. Church, 170 Clarke St. N., **Woodstock**, Ont. (#)

Art Talks!
The Ruth Memorial Series on the Arts & Culture

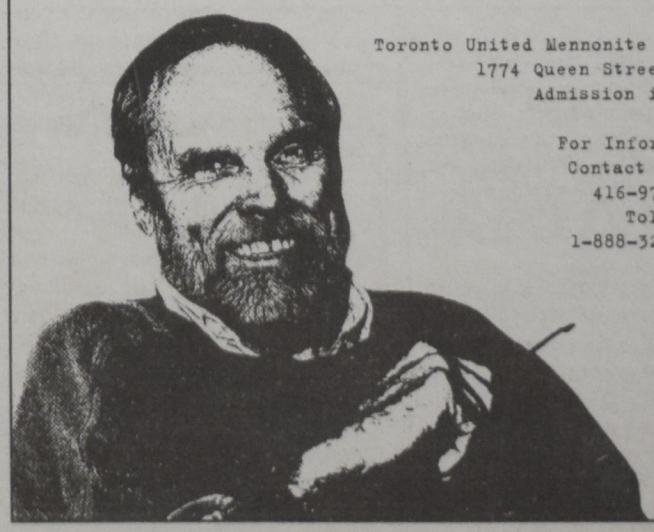
The Institute for Christian Studies
Presents Special Guest Speaker

Rudy Wiebe

Award-winning Canadian Author

Finding a Writer's Life

March 13, 1998
8:00 p.m.



Toronto United Mennonite Church
1774 Queen Street East
Admission is Free

For Information
Contact ICS at
416-979-2331
Toll Free
1-888-326-5347

News

Bethany Centre emphasizes standing with the poor

MARIA STAM PHOTOS

Members of Bethany Centre's collective kitchen cook together.

Maria Stam

LONDON, Ont. — The uniqueness of Bethany Centre in London, Ont., lies in its conviction that help for destitute people has to reach beyond the material to their social and spiritual needs. In this it differs from organizations which are mainly charitable, such as food banks, soup kitchens and coffee houses.

More than 100 persons with diverse needs visit the centre regularly and are treated as friends, offered support and companionship.

Founded nearly five years ago by the Roman Catholic Justice Office of the Diocese of London, the centre is located at the Bishop Cronyn Anglican Church and works in close contact with all Christian denominations.

Encouraged by the centre's homey, inviting atmosphere, troubled persons can feel confident to discuss their personal and family problems.

Counselling and advocacy is provided by the community chaplains, Beth Porter and Beth Tellaeche. Through many years of professional as well as voluntary activities the two women learned about the problems of impoverished people. Twelve years of leading the St. Peter's Coffee House brought the women in close contact with the day to day obstacles the poor encounter.

Problems varied according to the degree of special needs. Some had to cope with physical disabilities; others had spent time in psychiatric hospitals and were trying to adjust to living in the community. A number of the unemployed were discouraged by too many rejections and had given up looking for work all together. Young natives grapllled with life in an urban setting; others dealt with substance abuse; and then there were lonely elderly. All of them were searching for understanding, acceptance, and respect for their human dignity.

All persons referred to the centre also live with the devastating effects of poverty. In order to assist them, Bethany collaborates with other city organizations, such as the London Interfaith Commission and the Alliance on Behalf of the Mentally Ill.

When necessary, the two chaplains take on the role of mediators in dealing with governmental institutions. They know from experience that most marginalized persons feel intimidated by bureaucratic wrangling and delays. A diminished confidence and the loss of self-esteem undermines their courage to fight for themselves.

Cultivating self-esteem

The chaplains explain that in many cases, recipients of general welfare assistance or Canada disability pensions experience the loss of physical strength to struggle with authorities due to a poor diet.

Beth Porter also stresses that such people often feel isolated and powerless, which contributes to great anxiety in their daily lives. "Our aim is to encourage their belief in their own capacity," she says.

With the assistance of trained volunteers, the centre has developed several programs that can be instrumental in improving their friends' self-confidence and self-worth.

One program, directed toward the physical needs, opens an opportunity to get involved in a collective kitchen, where persons on a small budget can learn how to prepare low-cost, nutritional meals. Prepared food can be taken home to provide participants with a good supper for a couple of days. The other aspect of cooking together is budgeting, which helps members to stretch their food-budget a little longer.

Another program is a workers' co-operative called "Bags for All Seasons." Men and women of the Limblerlost low-income community learned during an eight-week training course in spring of 1996 to sew tote bags for various purposes to be sold at different outlets in the city. This helps members to supplement their income.

Bethany Centre has also founded women groups which meet regularly for Bible study and reflection. It tries to meet the social needs of members through animated discussions about specific subjects and the organization of group outings to special community events.

Over the past five years Bethany Centre has established a working relationship with students from educational institutions, such as King's College, Fanshawe College Nursing School and Brescia College's home economics program.

Work for social change

The overall goal of the centre is to reach beyond the immediate support of the poor toward working for social change.

In order to give testimony to the seriousness of their aim, representatives of Bethany participate in an ecumenical effort for change called "The Stand." Each Friday at noon their representatives stand in a silent vigil in front of City Hall on behalf of those who experience the impact of governmental cuts to social assistance.

By contributing to the "Neighbor to Neighbor" hearing in London in May 1997, the consequences of the drastically reduced welfare payments and vital support services have been brought to the public foreground. Realizing that words, if not accompanied by action, do not encourage change, the centre sees itself as an "agent of change." By applying the gospel message to everyday life, it hopes its Christian presence is being felt throughout the local community.

A break during a discussion at the centre with Chaplain Beth Tellaeche (centre).

News Digest

Good Canadian gouda

SUSSEX, N.B. — Joop Duivenvoorden comes from a long line of Dutch cheesemakers, and his wife, Regina, was also trained as one. When they moved to Canada 12 years ago, their plan was to produce only milk, but their children changed that, reports the *Globe and Mail*.

In 1986, the Duivenvoordens traded a life in the crowded Netherlands for the open spaces of a dairy farm near Sussex, in central New Brunswick. One day, they brought home a rubbery product from the store for dinner.

"The boys said, 'If this is Canadian cheese, then I don't want cheese anymore,'" says Joop Duivenvoorden. "We had no choice but to make it ourselves."

And so they did, to the joy of their children and marketgoers in Moncton and Fredericton. Customers have discovered and now love the natural hard gouda the Duivenvoordens produce.

Internet addiction

SEATTLE, Wash. — Internet addiction on college campuses is a rapidly growing epidemic, according to the new journal *Cyber Psychology and Behavior.* Several American universities have established counselling centres for Web addicts, and the University of Washington has limited the amount of Internet time available to students.

McUnion bid fails

MONTREAL — An attempt by McDonald's employees to form a "McUnion" at their fast-food restaurant near Montreal has failed because the franchise owners made a quick decision to close it. This took place before a scheduled March 10 hearing would have decided whether the employees could join the Teamsters. If the employees had gotten approval, they would have been the first in the fast-food chain to unionize in Canada.

Employee Brian MacDonald told the *Toronto Star*, "We've been had — but it's still a victory for us because we knew we were going to get our union."

The franchise's owners said it wasn't the attempt to unionize but the fact that the outlet was losing thousands of dollars that forced them to close shop.